

Growing Child®

4 Years

DON'T IS a Dead-End Word

How often have you heard a parent (could it be you?) say, "Jody, DON'T ____!" or don't do this, or that, or the other thing. Or, perhaps, "STOP doing that this instant!"

Now "stop" is a very useful word when used sparingly and to prevent injury. However, like the always-with-us "DON'T", STOP can also be a dead-end word.

A "dead-end word" is one that leads nowhere—and teaches nothing. When you say, "Don't do that!" you are not teaching because you are not providing your child with a desirable alternate behavior or activity. "DON'T!" just drops Moppet into a vacuum, leaving her to wonder, "What should I do?", or "What can I do?" Without guidance the child's next choice of activity may be equally undesirable and lead to another dead-end "DON'T!"

Consider this little scene, which is played out many times by many parents and children:

"Tom, don't touch that! I said don't touch that! You might break it! (Getting louder and louder) Tom, don't touch that vase. If you break it, you'll get a spanking... _____ Oh!"

CRASH!

Smack!!

Wah-h-h-h-h!

Mother is embarrassed: Tom is upset—but he hasn't learned anything.

Now consider some alternatives, other happier endings had Mother been ready to out-think her Tom.

Mother calls Tom's attention, then moves to join him.

"Tom, Aunt Jessica's vase is pretty, isn't it? Let me come

and look at it, too."

As she joins him, she takes his hands as they look together. Then perhaps Mother takes the fragile vase very carefully and holds it down where Tom can see and touch it. She says, "Isn't it beautiful? We must be very careful not to break it!" Then when Tom's curiosity has been satisfied she lets him help her replace it, moving it a little further out of reach. Finally, she moves Tom away with her and provides an alternate interest.

In this case Tom has learned something about appreciation of beauty, Mother has modelled the care we use in handling fragile objects, and Aunt Jessica has enjoyed their careful appreciation of her precious vase.

There is another possible happy ending, perhaps more suitable for another child.

Mother: "Tom, what do you suppose I've found in my purse? I'll bet you can't guess what it is! Come and see!"

By appealing to his curiosity Mother has provided Tom with a choice between Aunt Jessica's vase and something mysterious which he might enjoy more. Chances are Tom's curiosity will bring him to Mother's side, safely away from Aunt Jessica's vase.

It takes a little practice to outthink your almost-Four, but

the process gets easier as you go along and the results are well worth the effort. You may seize the opportunity to share enjoyment as in the first "happy ending", or you may wish to provide a second and more desirable choice.

In this event the trick is to create a situation in which the child has to make a decision between two (at least, to him) positive choices.

A dead-end DON'T leaves a child with a choice between "something" and "nothing"—and any child knows that any "something" is lots more fun than "nothing."

One last word—Don't you be a dead-end word dropper! You have alternatives!



Learning About Numbers

In exploring objects in space, it is important that Moppet perceive that distances between objects and differences in size do not in fact change the number of objects. Perhaps you have had the experience when one of two identical cookies breaks into many pieces and Moppet chooses the damaged cookie because "there's more." Or have you set the table and thought you miscounted when there appeared to be too many water glasses for the number of place settings?

So how do we help Moppet accept the fact that the cookie is still the same, that nothing has been added in spite of the abundance of crumbs? And how do we help Moppet to resist the deception of his senses that the number of objects remains unchanged even though they have been moved about in space and placed in new positions? By



permitting Moppet to actively engage in exploratory experiences, to question, answer questions, and support the answers with reasoning. Some examples:

1. The Teaparty. Materials: Cookies, juice, juice glasses, a table runner or strip of masking tape (designed to partition the table in half.)

Have Moppet place a cookie on the table runner, one cookie for each guest. Next, have the juice glass placed in a one-to-one match with the cookie, one glass for each cookie, on the outside of the table runner or line.



Ask Moppet to count with you the number of cookies and the number of glasses in order to establish that there are "the same" number of cookies as glasses.

Before allowing everyone to "dig in", you ask Moppet and guests to watch as you move the cookies and extend their length to about double the length of the glasses.



Next ask, "Is the number of cookies the same as the number of glasses?" Allow plenty of time for discussion and replace-



ment of the cookies into their initial positions before enjoying the teaparty. You may observe

Moppet's deception and misconceptions. Hopefully with a variety of experiences, Moppet will begin to volunteer increasingly more logical answers.

2. Match-ups. Materials: Pairs of shoes of different sizes; pairs of socks of comparable sizes, a runner or line down the center of a space.

Check out with Mopper what family members would be likely to wear each size pair of shoes and socks.

Next, ask Moppet to grade the shoes, placing them in order, small to large. Finally, have Moppet match the socks with the corresponding pair of shoes.



Now, the challenge! Tell Moppet to watch as you gather all the socks and put them in a pile.



Ask, "Is the number of socks the same as the number of shoes?" The answer will probably be "no." The reason will certainly be illogical, something like, "There are lots more shoes. Can't you see how much more room they take?" as the child gestures the length of the line or runner. Don't correct such response in spite of the fact that it is based upon perception rather than reason. Simply ask Moppet to restore the position of the socks to their shoes. Repeated experiences again will be more convincing

than anything you try to teach or explain.



When & How to Discuss Sexual Topics with Children

When parents ask when and how they might best discuss sexual topics with their children, they are frequently advised to tell the child only what he asks about, so that the parent will not relay information to the child that he is neither interested in nor ready to absorb. When strictly adhering to this advice, however, parents tend to restrict their responses and miss opportunities for easy, open discussions on sexual topics with their children. In actuality sex can be discussed as openly and naturally as other topics the child initiates. For example, if a four year old child sees a watermelon sitting on the kitchen counter and asks his mother what it is, she will probably not restrict her responses to "It is a watermelon." She will not assume that since the child has not asked what a watermelon is used for, what the watermelon looks like inside, or if there are any seeds in the watermelon, that he is neither interested in this information nor ready to absorb it. Therefore, she will probably respond to her child's question about the watermelon by telling him its name; telling him it is for eating; having him notice the outside color, temperature and texture; and if he is still interested, cutting it open to show him the inside color and texture; telling him that it is sweet and allowing him to taste it; showing him the seeds and explaining to him that the seeds may be planted. A parent may give a child who has asked about a watermelon any part or all of this information without concern that she is telling him too much about the watermelon. She can determine the extent of information she imparts by the child's interest and comprehension levels as she discusses the watermelon with him and it is her responsibility as a

parent to be sensitive to these levels.

The same criteria could be used for discussing sexual topics with a child. If a four year old girl notices her brother's penis and asks her mother what it is, the mother need not assume that since the child has not asked for more detailed information about it, that she only wants to know the name for the penis. This can be a natural opportunity to permit the child to learn something about sexuality, just as the inquiry about the watermelon was a natural opportunity to facilitate the child's learning about food and plants. The mother, therefore, using the child's interest and comprehension levels as her guide, can at this time tell her child the name for the penis; she can tell her daughter that although she does not have a penis, she has a clitoris and a vagina. If the child is interested in this information, the mother can show her where her clitoris and vagina are; if the mother has noticed her daughter touching her genitals from time to time, she can explain that touching the clitoris feels good for the girl and touching the penis feels good for the boy, like scratching ones back can feel good.

Parents who will discuss sexual topics openly with the young child will find that the task of teaching their child about sex is greatly facilitated. Often, parents avoid the subject of sexuality for so long that when the time comes that they can no longer put it off, they find that both they and the child are uncomfortable talking about it together and/or they find that their child has already obtained the "facts" from other sources. Generally, children who are left to absorb information about sex over time also absorb a great deal of erroneous information, and the parent finds it necessary to try to erase some of these incorrect ideas as well as teach the correct ones. Further, the parent who has not openly talked about sexual topics from the time the child is very

young may find it extremely awkward to begin to relate sexual information to an older child. For example, when a ten year old girl is unsure of where her vagina is, it may be more difficult to teach her about menstruation than it is to show a three year old where her vagina is.



Growing Into Bigger Thoughts

Many months ago, we first talked about the way that ideas and understandings are formed. A child's understanding of the world around him is not based on adult logic, which contains a lot of wordly wisdom mixed in with the basic ability to reason. For instance, if we adults see something rising into the air, be it a kite, an airplane or a balloon, we know from experience and education that something external is pushing or pulling on the object to make it rise. But such logic escapes the young preschooler, because of his limited experience. He is more apt to devise explanations that fit in with his narrower point of view. If an object moves without visible force or human guidance, he may endow the object with a mind and will of its own and say confidently that the object moved because it wanted to. This fits with his knowledge of his own will and that of other people. He knows that movement can result simply from a desire to move.

As we said previously, a person's explanation of a happening will stay the same until something comes along to challenge the explanation — something that makes the explanation fail to work any more. Then the explanation or idea must be changed, either a little or a lot, until it again covers all the observations, new and old. In month 13 we noted that when Toddler learns to put blocks through holes into a container, he forms the idea that the big container will accept the small objects. But then along comes an object that is too big to

fit through the hole. Then he has to change his idea to a slightly different one: that only objects up to a certain size will fit through the hole. Later when he fitted objects into holes of different shapes, he had to modify his idea again: an object has to be the same shape as the hole, and not too large, if it is going to go through.

Whether it is blocks into holes or complicated scientific principles, our ideas are formed through a number of changes in simpler ideas. Much of formal education is designed to speed up this process by giving us the true explanation, or at least the latest theory, right from the start. But such knowledge is really the latest refinement of an idea that may have undergone many changes over the course of human history. So for both individuals and mankind as a whole, progress in understanding often comes in many little steps and stages, marked by challenges along the way.

You can graphically demonstrate the process of idea development in Moppet by carefully controlling a set of experiences and then challenging his newly formed idea at the appropriate time. This can be done with a little game that should be spread over a period of several days. It consists of trying to guess which of two objects will hit the ground first when they are dropped together from high in the air. A little planning is required: not just any two objects will do. One object must be large and the other small. The small object should be light in relation to its bulk so that it has air resistance and falls relatively slowly. The large object should be fairly solid as well as large. Some good pairs would be a jar lid and matchbook cover, a shoe and a cotton ball, a pencil and a piece of yarn, a pillow and a small open napkin or handkerchief. In each pair the first mentioned object is larger and it will also be the first to reach the floor.

Hold such a pair of objects high in the air and ask Moppet

to tell you which of the two will hit the floor first. Then let him see if he was correct, repeating if necessary until he is sure which one landed first. If he wants to drop objects for you to guess, give him a pre-planned pair. Otherwise you will be forced to say that they will both hit at the same time. One or two pairs is enough for any one day.

After a while, Moppet should be able to predict which of your two selected objects will land first. He will have learned that the larger object always falls faster. You can even ask him how he knows the winner, and smugly accept his explanation that it is larger. After you are sure he has this "principle" down pat, you can turn the table on your bright four year old. Select pairs in which the large object is fairly light and the small item is compact and heavy. Examples that work are a paper cup and penny, an envelope and comb, an empty crayon box and a crayon. Now the large object will fall more slowly than the small one. These pairs will not only upset Moppet's predictions, they will also pose a problem to his thinking. For now he must throw out his theory that largeness is what makes an object fall faster, and come up with some other explanation. Let him toy with this problem for awhile. Eventually he will be able to make a correct prediction based on the principle of the resistance an object offers to the air, even though he will not be able to express this idea in words. With help, he may be able to say something like, "The air slows it down," which is quite correct.

The important skill here is for Moppet not only to let go of one explanation when it proves inadequate, but to form another idea based on continued observation of all that is happening.

One way to encourage your youngster to be flexible, to look for alternative explanations, is to call attention, occasionally, to apparent inconsistencies or contradictions in Moppet's

world. This could be in the form of a question, like, "Why don't animals have to wear clothes?" What appears to be a contradiction is really not, as you explain that an animal's fur or hair gives warmth and protection in the same way that clothes would. Or maybe Moppet will ask the question, "How can airplanes fly?" You could reply, "Oh, maybe they flap their wings like birds do." This will dramatize an inconsistency that can easily be recognized by Moppet, or will be recognized the first time he sees an airplane fly. After he has pondered that problem a little, you can help him with the idea that a bird's wing pushes on the air to make him go, but an airplane has those noisy engines to push on the air so it doesn't have to flap its wings. Detailed explanations aren't necessary or even desirable. Moppet will fall silent to digest this piece of information, and when he is ready for more he will come back to you with another question.

Another possibility: When you see a cat, you can say to Moppet, "Cats don't like to go in the water. So, how do they keep themselves clean?" If he doesn't have a knowing answer, you can ask him to watch the cat and pretty soon the cat will show him how it keeps itself clean. If he thinks that all things must be scrubbed in the tub, he will find that, with some animals at least, nature has another way.

And so on. For Moppet's understanding to grow, he must feed on a rich diversity of experiences in the world around him. The common, familiar things let him practice and strengthen his older ideas. The surprises and mysteries in the world help him form the all-important new ones.



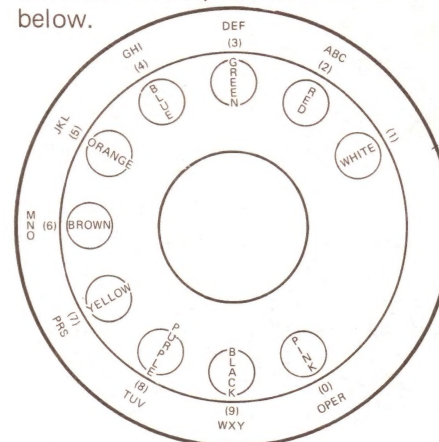
Color Matching

Parents of preschoolers may find themselves bombarded with

mail-order advertising for "Teach Your Child" kits. One of the more popular, "How To Use The Telephone," is not particularly unique but it has been used effectively with the mentally retarded who do not recognize letter and number symbols. We'd like to share our version of the color-coded telephone system which should be fun to create and use.

Materials:

1. One cardboard disc that fits over your telephone and has nine different circles, such as the one below.



2. A scrapbook which will be the color-coded phone directory.

3. Photographs of the people whose phone numbers will be color-coded into the directory.

Decide what colors you want to code each circle. (It is unimportant that Moppet may not know the color names. It is only color recognition which is needed for this task.) Color in the seven circles, and your telephone is ready.

Now for the directory. Say you want Moppet to be familiar with important numbers such as Grandma's, Dad's (or Mom's) work phone, the doctor, or a close friend. Paste a photograph, one to a page, and beneath each picture draw the appropriate seven colored circles. For example, the number is GOT-3296. If you were to accept the colors of the above disc, the page will look like this:



It will take a bit of practice for Moppet to learn to start at the left and work toward the right. Young children frequently don't have a consistent sense of direction. If you observe that this is a problem, give a starting cue such as an arrow or a star and explain, "We start at the arrow."



You may want to print the name of the person next to the picture. This can become a subtle way of learning letters and words.

Moppet, without any special help from you, will associate picture with the printed name of the person in the picture and eventually recognize the name even when the picture is removed. Meanwhile, color matching (the color name with color perception) is becoming solid and consistent.



A Snapshot Note

Although you can expect a certain strangeness in snapshots taken by preschoolers, they can do it, and it's worth it to let them. Their point of view is different from yours; so is their eye level. Their pictures give you a window into their world. Corners of ceilings and their own two feet appeal to 3 and 4 year olds. They love to aim up into the treetops. They're pleased and proud of a picture of a rock, a sidewalk crack, the dog's tail. They take people from behind, and faces from very close up. (The best camera for children as young as 3 years is an inexpensive Kodak Instamatic.)

Older children can take their own Tricky Pictures to see if they can fool the younger kids. They are very clever at it. Textures interest them: Rug, fur, basket, stone, concrete, wood, grass, sand, bark, burlap. And they will almost certainly get a kick out of objects taken from odd perspectives: A flag pole straight up, a kettle straight down.

Now, here's a related story called:



Family Album-In-Action

"Stand right there against the tree. That's perfect. Now smile. Good. I got it." A smiling Aunt Minnie to paste in the family album. But Minnie's nieces and nephews, though they will readily recognize who she is, don't know their aunt as a body grinning against a tree trunk. They know her as a watermelon pickle canner. They know the noise of her plastic apron, and the shine of sweat on her upper lip. As they watch her work, they smell spices, and spit pits, hurt their fingers on hot boiled jars. Aunt Minnie is Aunt-Minnie-in-the-kitchen. Aunt Minnie is herself in August pickle canning time. Aunt Minnie is the first, and next, what-do-you-do-and-how of what she and her nieces and nephews have done many, many times.

If you want a family album that means the most to your children, there's every reason in the world to get Aunt Minnie away from the tree and put her back in the kitchen—but take your camera with you. Take a shot of her hauling a melon, cutting it, peeling the rind. If her back is to you while she's skimming the syrup, fine. That's the way children see her, too. If she's frowning at cinnamon sticks instead of at the camera, good—because that's the way things really are.

Now when Aunt Minnie is pasted in the album, sweet

tastes, good smells, sticky juice, the sweating and frowning and laughing of how she is and what she does go with her. The idea is that not only does Aunt Minnie making pickles make sense, so do the pictures that represent her and the pickle-making process.



And you have the story—the once-upon-a-time, and then, and finally—of August pickle-making time. It is not the precious moment (no matter what the ads say) but the whole familiar event—from Saturday car-wash to bedtime piggybacks to buying, cleaning, cutting and lighting the Halloween pumpkin—that strikes the child as typical, comfy, memorable. Families are stories—an album is a story book.

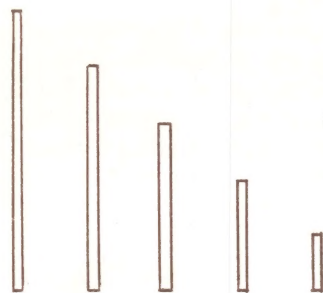


Long & Short

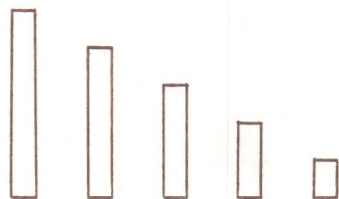
Activities of seriation—the opportunity to explore and develop concepts of order (size, length, color hue, texture)—are perfect challenges for Moppet. We are offering examples of such activities. Scholars say that such activities (or activities like this) are essential for a child's cognitive growth or the child's integration of perceptions, language and thought.

To learn about length, you'll need: 1" dowel rod which has been sawed into lengths ranging from 6" to 30" with increments of 6". And, you'll need 3/4" sticks which have been sawed into lengths from 3" to 15" with increments of 3".

Here's a general idea of what the dowels will look like:



Here's what the square sticks will look like:



First, ask Moppet to sort the sticks from the dowels. (Don't hesitate to call them dowels— young children love big or different words.) Next engage Moppet in the grading process: "Find the longest dowel; find the shortest dowel." Now you are ready to consider comparative lengths. Have all of the dowels nearby in order for Moppet to hold, compare, discriminate. Start out by asking for the "longest dowel," then the "next (second) longest dowel," etc. Work in reverse and try the "shortest dowel" and "next shortest dowel." Since this is a learning experience, DO NOT TEACH. Allow Moppet to observe the process and the product, graded dowels, and then assess the accuracy.

This is fun for a small group as well; children enjoy cooperative participation. (If Moppet has not had prior experience with grading objects, it might be necessary to provide supplementary experiences. (See issue 2 years, 8 months, Concepts in Space.)

We have observed first and second graders who confuse size and length. If asked to identify the 15" stick, such children label it the "largest" or "biggest" rather than the "longest." They have had either insufficient experience with seriating objects and/or the adults in their lives have used imprecise language when dealing with these concepts.

Learning about length must be purposeful as well as fun. As soon as Moppet understands the concept of relative length and its vocabulary, elaborate upon its use in the environment. On a walk outdoors call attention to "long" and "short" blades of grass. Compare automobiles to determine which is "longer" and which is "shorter." Discuss the lengths of legs, arms, fingers. Encourage Moppet to speculate about lengths, explaining or justifying why one object is longer or shorter than another.



What Is Your Child Doing Right Now?

If he's not sleeping, he's learning. What's your part? A word here and there, some more Scotch tape, a question, a piece of aluminum foil instead of paper to crayon on, conversation, a safety pin to hold a cape together. Noticing. Noticing that Kate's pretending to cook—would a little dough help out? Noticing that Ted is putting cars in separate piles—by color? by size? A shoebox makes a garage. Noticing that Sally has a pocketful of acorns. Enough to give one to each member of the family? Enough to fill a cup?

Learning is not a plan-it-in-advance thing, not a sit-down-and-get-it-done-thing. At least not all the time.

Start with what your child is already doing. Pick up the clues. Play it as it happens.



Dear Growing Child

I would like to say how very much I enjoy each issue and learn so much also. I love watching our daughter grow and experience the world around her. Growing Child has taught me what she is capable of each month and this knowledge makes for a better relationship between parent and child.

Thank you to all you people who work so hard to inform parents about the little people of this world—our children.

Lynn S.
Ft. Sill, OK



Next Month

- Transactions and Time
- Bad Dreams
- Who Is Piaget?

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Growing Child[®]

4 Years
1 Month

Who Is Piaget?

Some parents have written to us asking why we have not mentioned Piaget and his studies of how children learn. Really, almost everything we have said in *Growing Child* has had its roots in the theories and writings of Jean Piaget. However, since some of you have asked, this seems like a good time to talk about the man and his work.

Jean Piaget is a Swiss psychologist who has made a unique contribution to our understanding of how children learn at different stages in their development. Most psychologists have studied how much children might be expected to have learned by certain ages. They have examined large numbers of children in order to establish norms or averages of knowledge or performance for children of different ages. Usually this has been done in the hope of predicting academic performance during the school years.

Jean Piaget began his career as a biologist. He was therefore particularly interested in the growth and development of living organisms and in behavioral and adaptive changes which accompanied these body changes. He brought this developmental viewpoint with him into the field of psychology. Instead of the normative approach used by most psychologists, Piaget elected to do long-term careful observation of the adaptive behaviors of infants and children. Daily observations of infant behavior was done on his own children beginning at their birth. This was supplemented by the study of small groups of children of various ages. To these children Piaget would pose simple problems, asking questions

designed to pinpoint the intellectual process by which the children reached a solution.



As a result of these seemingly informal but actually very systematic and scientific observations, Piaget evolved theories about how children learn which have changed the thinking of most educators.

Piaget sees a child as an active learner. That is learning only takes place when the individual actively adapts his present knowledge to include the new piece of information. As the child grows and develops, his ability to adapt and make new information a part of himself, becomes progressively more efficient.

Piaget outlines sequential periods in a child's life which are characterized by the way in which the child processes, stores, retrieves and uses the information received through his senses. Each period and the stages within each period are developmentally ordered. Each child must develop through each period of development before he can enter the next.

This theory has important implications for parents and educators. Attempts to teach a child ideas, and concepts, which he is not ready to learn can only result in frustration and failure. To expect abstract thinking or problem-solving of a child who

must still think only in concrete terms is as unrealistic as to expect a tree to bear fruit before it is mature enough to flower.

The Developmental Periods as Piaget sees them are:

(1) The Sensori-Motor Period.

This period extends roughly from birth to age 2 years. During this period the child develops cognitively by acting on his environment. He learns primarily by doing. He learns to roll, crawl, sit, creep and walk so that he enlarges his available learning environment. He reaches, grasps, pulls, pushes, carries, pokes, squeezes—he acts in some way upon every object within reach. He sees himself as an object among other objects.

Toward the end of his second year the child becomes able to internally represent or visualize objects or events not physically present. There has been a great change in the quality of his intellectual behavior.

Upon completing development of the sensori-motor period the child has reached the level of intellectual ability which is necessary for the development of language and the representation of objects by verbal or visual symbols. This does not mean that he will move into the next period of development as if it were another and larger room, leaving all sensori-motor development behind. Instead new abilities and more efficient methods of information processing are integrated with all previous sensori-motor learnings. Piaget feels strongly that the development of language and of logical thought is based upon the prior development of the necessary level of sensori-motor operations.

(2) The Pre-Operational Period (Ages 2 to 7 years).

During this period the child gradually changes from one who learns primarily by doing to one who functions mainly at a conceptual and symbolic level. He is increasingly able to internally represent events (think) and becomes less dependent upon trial-and-error actions for direction of his behavior.

Words come to represent objects and this emergence of language increases the powers of thought. Thinking and speaking are much faster than doing. However, the child's thinking is still strongly influenced by his perceptions. His thinking remains centered in himself. He doesn't question his own thinking even when confronted with contradictory evidence. The child's thinking, from his point of view, is always quite logical and correct.

This self-centered thinking gradually decreases during years 6 and 7 when the child begins to communicate his thoughts to his peers and to listen to their communication.

Qualitatively the thought of the pre-operational child is an advance over the thought of the sensori-motor child. Pre-operational thought is truly representational (symbolic) and behavior sequences can be played out in the head rather than only in real physical events.

As he enters the pre-operational period the child's cognitive behavior is like that of the sensori-motor child but by age 7 there is little resemblance.

(3) Period of Concrete Operations (Ages 7 to 11).

During this period cooperative, un-self-centered communication evolves and for the first time the child becomes a truly social being, communicating ideas to others and accepting their thoughts in return. Equally as important, the child learns to use logical reasoning to solve problems involving "concrete" objects and events which contain elements related to his own experience. He cannot yet solve hypothetical problems, problems that are highly verbal and abstract or those which re-

quire a complex series of steps. Nevertheless the quality of his thinking and the processes by which he learns by the end of this period are far superior to those of the pre-operational child.

(4) Period of Formal Operations (Ages 11 to 15).

During this period the child is better able to organize classes and categories of information, to reason scientifically, and to develop general theories by means of which he can deal with a variety of related problems. As the adolescent completes his development through this period he has achieved the potential for logical adult thought. He has developed the "cognitive machinery" for dealing with the problems of the "real world." He has still to learn how to use his logic effectively in relation to the reality of life.

To summarize, Piaget's theory emphasizes the qualitative changes which occur during cognitive development. To him cognitive development is the intellectual counterpart of biological adaptation to our environment. As we eat food and change it into the living tissues of our bodies, so we receive information about our world through all of our senses and change these sensations into words, ideas and actions. And while the processes remain the same throughout life, our body structure changes from helpless infancy to capable adulthood. In the same way our behavior concepts, thoughts and problem solving abilities change as our cognitive structures mature.



Bad Dreams

Bad dreams are normal recurring events starting in infancy. Psychiatrists say that bad dreams appear to represent controlled anxiety. They are different from nightmares which are less common and are thought to represent uncontrolled anxiety. While experiencing a nightmare a child may panic or hallucinate until fully awake and again in contact with

the world. Growing children at 4½ and 5 years of age are known to have frequent bad dreams. For example, they imagine that there are monsters coming in through the bedroom window ready to attack. At this point children awaken and sometimes with a pounding heart. They believe their dreams are external events. By 5 years however, they come to know that their dreams are not real, and soon after they realize that their dreams cannot be seen by others. When children are about 6 years old they are aware that their dreams are personal and take place inside themselves. In the case of nightmares, be comforting. And do check out, eliminate or avoid anything which may cause fear and anxiety during the course of the day.



Transactions and Time

There is no easier method of demonstrating how changes in objects occur than in carrying out the actual transactions. Children learn about the changes in events and objects through their participation in "Before-Now-After" experiences. The following activities may be carried out with one or many children at the same time. Materials:

- 1) 2-4 potato chips;
- 2) Soda or graham crackers;
- 3) small piece of chalk.

Now with a rolling pin or plain fingers, encourage *Growing Child* to roll, squeeze, pinch, pound the contents. The "afterwards" product will emerge as:

- 1) crushed potato chips;
- 2) ground crackers;
- 3) chalk dust.

If you prefer transactions of a



grander sort, try these.

Materials:

carrot, vegetable peeler, newspaper, tray and bowl.

1) After the carrot has been scrubbed, have *Growing Child* peel curls off the carrot. Even a small number of curls will occupy more space on the tray than the single carrot.

2) With a piece of newspaper, *Growing Child* can tear pieces small enough to make confetti. The confetti will fill a bowl in contrast to the single paper.

Recommended Reading

For Parents:

1. Creative and Mental Growth, Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert Brittain, MacMillan, N.Y., 6th Ed., 1976. Almost every library has a copy of this book which promotes art for children as a growth of seeing, feeling, hearing, smelling and tasting—the contact between man and the environment.
2. The Boys and Girls Book About Divorce. Richard Gurdner, M.D., Bantam Paperback Books, N.Y., 1970.
3. Children and Money, Grace Weinstein, Schocken Paperback Books, N.Y., 1976.
4. The Games Children Play, A.H. Chapman, M.D., A. Berkley Medallion Book, N.Y., 1971.
5. For Parents to Read to Children. The ABC of a Summer Pond, Judi Friedman, Johnny Reads, Inc., St. Petersburg, Fla., 1976. Once more the child is invited to use the senses of touch, vision, hearing, to respond to important questions posed by the story and its pictures.
6. Days in the Woods, A. Harris Stone and Dorian Brooks, Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972. This is an ideal book for introducing the study of nature to *Growing Child*. Through the senses of vision, hearing, thought and smell the child is able to explore the inviting challenges about plants and animals.



The Same Game

The Same Game is a quick,

simple chance to pluck classification skills out of everyday experience. Play it while you cook dinner, when your child is getting dressed, picking up his toys, eating dinner. Help him get more and more accurate. If he is comparing two pieces of cake, "bigger" is okay, "much bigger" says more, "twice as big" really describes the difference. Play it from two years old and on and on and on. Choose two objects. Any two. Put them next to each other.

Start easy. A shirt and a shoe. What's the same about them? A pencil and a crayon. What's the same about them? A pickle and a popsicle. What's the same about them?

Get Harder. A cookie and a plate are both round, break if you drop them, belong in the kitchen. Are they both decorated? They are both baked to make them hard. Would they both roll down a hill?

Try the tough. A pill and a pillow contain the same syllable. Are they both white? Do they both make you feel better? Some pillows are round.

Switch the game. A cup and a glass. What's different about them? Remember color, size, shape and what they're made of, what they're for, what they're called, what their special features are.

Play it yourself. Take an ordinary object—a book of matches. Think of all the groups of objects it has something in common with: Paper things, printed things, combustible things, rectangular things, folded things, cut things, manufactured things. That's a beginning. How long a list can you make? Now try a pencil.

DON'T worry about which two objects to pick—take what's closest to hand. There will always be something the same about them, even if it's only that they're in the same room.

DON'T make it a test, with set questions and set answers. Just grab two things spontaneously and talk about them.

DON'T think about "right" and "wrong"—your child sees things differently. Your "rights" and "wrongs" can't always be his at this stage.



Classification:

Things Alike, Things Different

Things alike, things different—the way we classify, the way we group things. Who cares? We all do. Because we have to. Because we can't live without being able to tell the difference between aspirin and arsenic. We live classification every day, all day. So will our children. It's classification that tells them how to think about the world; where to look for a crayon; what part of the Sears catalog will have a picture of a doll. It tells her she can expect to find bears, monkeys and elephants in a box of animal crackers, and jelly next to peanut butter on the kitchen shelf. Most important, this kind of skill will show her how to create order out of chaos, how to cope confidently with unknowns in the future when we're not around to give her the answers. And even while she's little, it's going to make life a lot easier for you.



It looks simple, but classification isn't as easy as apple pie. In the supermarket, soft drinks are arranged on shelves by brand (Canada Dry, Nehi), by flavor (lime, orange, cherry), by size (quarts, pints), by number (six-packs, eight-packs) and by type of container (cans, bottles).

How does a small child learn such a tricky way of thinking? You help her. Almost every minute of the day, she hears and

sees you using the idea of Same and Different that underlies all classification.

She begins to realize why you call root beer and ginger ale soft drinks: They're all wet, sweet, fizzy. Then she begins to make fancier distinctions: She asks for 7-up, and she doesn't want Pepsi because she knows that these two soft drinks are very different in color, smell, taste.

When a baby points to a dog and says "dog," her family is impressed that she is learning to say dog. What's more astonishing is that she has learned to think dog. She can point to a Chihuahua or a Great Dane. She can recognize a real dog, a stuffed toy dog, a photograph of a dog, a drawing of a dog. But what is the "dogness" she has learned to recognize? Try making a list of the special features that are the same for all dogs, but that make them different from all other animals. It's tougher than we think.

Children need a hand in getting a hold on ideas of same and different. They'll get by on their own, but they'll do much better with a boost from you. And the more you feed them, the more surprising they'll become.

A girl, examining the floppy wings of a plastic grasshopper, announced, "Butterfly." "It's a grasshopper," her mother explained, "but it flies like a butterfly." "Birds fly," said the girl, "and bats and airplanes, and," finished the girl, "capas fly."

Her idea of flying was very basic, very practical. Her mother's comment had helped her to classify in terms of "same way of moving." With more talk and more experience she will learn about things that float, flap, blow, are jet-powered or propeller-driven. And she'll be able to classify them with marvellous accuracy.

Children need lots of words to describe the likenesses and differences they see, hear, feel, smell. Don't shy away from using exact ones: wide, narrow, pink, purple, half the length of my finger, fat-

ter than a pillow, pointed, curly, straight, coarse, upside-down, sour, crunchy, the day after tomorrow.

Words make sense out of the most everyday experiences. You just have to catch your own thoughts and say them out loud. If you want your child to get a pair of socks from on top of the table, and she looks underneath, it's no help to say, "No, not there; there." It is a help to say, "Not under the table, on the table." If she then brings you the red socks instead of the blue ones, it's no help to say, "No, not these; these." It is a help to say, "Bring me the blue socks, not the red socks." And go further—you want her to get the blue socks because you're going to dress her in her blue dress. Tell her so—tell her how pretty she'll look because the color of her blue socks goes with the color of her blue dress.

Once she knows the words that are her keys to same and different, there are lots of ways she can have fun classifying things around the house. She can sort socks by size and color, set the table, put away the silver, find things for you in the supermarket, arrange books in order of size.

When your child has heaped up enough experience with real things, she can begin to play the game just in her head. She can think of herself as part of many groups she shares a sameness with: She belongs to a group called children; she is a girl. She is a special kind of animal called human, and part of a special human group called family.



Dear Growing Child

"I am thankful there is a publication such as yours! When I married I did not have any parenting or child development skills, just the love of children."

Your magazine has been a "Godsend" to myself as well as my husband. He loves to try the new activities with our son each month.

I'm positive if more parents read your magazine they would understand more their children and themselves as parents. And that's what we need to prevent the abuse of these wonderful children!

You can be sure, the good that comes from your efforts is immeasurable."

*Linda & Paul M.
Rowlett, TX*



Next Month

- Books, Books, Books!
- Color and Color Relationships
- Ecology & Some Eye-Hand Coordination Activities

Growing Child®

6/88

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Growing Child[®]

4 Years
3 Months

Sorting Things Out

In the pre-school years from 3 through 5, your child will learn much by repetition. Moppet will return again and again to a favorite book, a favorite toy, a favorite puzzle or a favorite set of materials such as blocks. Each time Moppet plays with these familiar objects he learns something new about them. That information was always there to be learned, but the child who returns to the familiar toy is not the same child who played with it a month ago. Now he brings to his play everything that he has experienced and learned since the last time he handled the toy or material. Because of this added experience he is now ready to learn more from his present play than he could have learned a month before. The toy, puzzle, book or set of blocks is the same—but, as the child brings more to the activity, he learns more from it.

One of the most important intellectual processes which the child develops during this period is the process of organizing things into groups. One of the ways in which he develops this skill is by sorting objects by their appearance, feel or use. He learns to recognize and discriminate things that are alike (the same) from those that are not alike (different). He also begins to sort things out in his mind by their uses.

Sorting games for quiet times or rainy days provide a child with valuable practise in organizing and classifying objects, while providing entertainment. The games described are not meant to be "lessons." They are experiences and opportunities for you to interact with him so that he is exposed to both the concrete materials and to an interested

adult who shows him interesting things to do and then encourages him to play on his own. Try for a balance between directed and "free play" activities.

As we have said many times before, no two children are alike even if they were born on the same day! You may find that your child takes to sorting activities like the proverbial duck takes to water. You may find that the materials interest him—but not in the way you anticipated. It may be that he will want to stay at only a part of the activity for awhile before he is ready to move on. Adapt your rhythm to that of the child. Play together, enjoy together and grow together.



When setting up a sorting game based on how the objects look it is usually best to begin with only two different objects. When this is mastered you can go on to sorting three, four or five different objects. The only materials needed for this game are the collection of objects to be sorted, and the boxes to put them in. Any two types of objects can be used: buttons and spools, bottle caps and corks, blocks and marbles, forks and spoons, etc.

Another kind of sorting game would include sorting by color: red blocks from blue blocks,

colored buttons from white buttons, etc. Four can discriminate by color although he may not be able to name them himself or even select an object of a certain color when it is named until he is five. Name the colors for him but just don't expect him to name them. You start the game by saying "Look! Here is a red block! I'll put it here! Can you find another one like it?" When Four finds another red block let him put it with the first. Repeat using the other color. Then take turns with him, encouraging him to continue independently.

Sorting by size—"Let's put all the little ones here and all the big ones there!"

Sorting by shape—blocks from balls, cardboard cut out circles from cut out squares, squares from triangles, etc.—without regard for size.

So far the sorting games are concerned only with one perceptual quality—size, shape, or color. Four is not quite ready for sorting by more than one quality until he sorts well by one at a time. Follow your child's lead. When he shows a desire for greater challenge give a trial at combined size and color—for example sorting big colored buttons, small colored buttons, big white buttons, small white buttons.

And while we are talking about sorting games we must not forget sorting by use:

Doll house furniture into proper rooms.

Things we wear from things we eat.

Things we play with from things we ride in.

Pictures of trucks from pictures of passenger cars.

Add such assortments as

separating pictures of dogs from pictures of cats, or flowers from trees, sticks from stones, dried lima beans from elbow macaroni and a lot of other things that you can probably find around the house.

Sorting can be a game in helping mother, too.

Putting away the silver after a meal—separating the knives, forks, and spoons and putting them in their proper section of the drawer.

Helping separate the laundry into white and colored in preparation for washing.

Separate Daddy's socks from Moppet's sock — by size — then a second separation of each pile into white and colored. Perhaps, matching Moppet's own socks into pairs by color.

Helping put away the groceries —cans go here, fresh vegetables here, paper towels here, etc.

Moppet's home is an ideal school in which to learn how to organize things into groups—which is the first step in organizing sensory information into thinking.



Music and Lessons

Since Moppett was an infant we have stressed the importance of listening to music. Some parents are asking when to start their children on musical instruments. These parents remember practicing their lessons by counting "one-two-three, one-two-three", and they want music to be more meaningful for their children.

We feel music is a language and at this age we cannot offer advice about instruments, but we urge parents to continue to expose Moppet to varieties of music—recorded music and live concerts. We can offer information about music methods or approaches to the teaching of preschool children. Group music lessons are very motivating to the child and cost parents considerably less money than private lessons. Which method to choose? One that stresses voice, body move-

ment, the piano or violin? Here are some brief descriptions of the most popular current group methods.

1) Dalcroze—This method emphasizes body movement, eurhythmics, listening skills and improvisation, using natural movements to express children's understanding of "galloping" notes, "running" notes or "sad" notes. Later on they express these through use of instruments.

2) Kodaly—This system emphasizes the voice. Once the child has learned to sing, an instrument is chosen.



3) Orff—This approach teaches music through particular instruments designed by Carl Orff. Initially they learn these instruments which are similar to the xylophone, metallophone, wood blocks, hand drums and triangles. The music is complemented by body movement, speech and singing. Later the children move on to solo instruments.

4) Suzuki, created by a Japanese music teacher named Suzuki, teaches an instrument immediately, most commonly the violin. The instrument is mini-sized and music is taught primarily through listening to records. However, the parent must be involved at home because drill is very much a part of the system.

It happens often that two or more methods are used in combination because you can see they do blend.

How to choose a teacher or school? With the exception of Dalcroze where the school certifies its graduates, there is no pro-

fessional accreditation for music teachers outside of the public schools. Therefore we suggest that you shop around by visiting, observing and listening to music classes for pre-school children. When child and teacher don't mesh, change teachers. Don't give up the music.



Recommended Reading

Public Affairs Pamphlets cover a variety of topics and offer valuable information in a concise, handy format. Here are just a few titles:

Playmates: The Importance of Childhood Friendships, No. 525

Helping Children Face Crises, No. 541

One-parent Families, No. 543

Pressures on Children, No. 589

Teaching Children About Money, No. 593

Environment Hazards to Children, No. 600

Stepfamilies—A Growing Reality, No. 609

Raising an Adopted Child, No. 620

You and Your In-Laws: Help for Some Common Problems, No. 635

Handling Family Money Problems, No. 626

Getting Help for a Disabled Child—Advice from Parents, No. 615

Each pamphlet costs \$1.00 and is available (by number) from: Public Affairs Pamphlets, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Quantities are available at lower prices.



Discipline: Ten Rules That Can Work For You

Discipline is something that concerns all of us who care for children. We need to know how to deal with the hundreds of small and large problems that come up. But, discipline is more

than punishment for misbehavior. It is the means through which we teach our children good conduct now and for the future. Every mistake a child makes is an opportunity for learning.

We all want our children to grow up to be responsible adults. We want them to know right from wrong. We want them to know how to stand up for their own needs, rights, and convictions without interfering with the rights of others. We want them to learn inner controls rather than rely on someone else to tell them how to behave. These are the long-term goals of discipline.

It can be hard to achieve these goals. Some of the methods of discipline we use to bring a problem under control may make our children too dependent on outer control. The time to help Moppet learn the good habits of self-discipline is now. Here are ten rules that can guide you:

1) Teach by Your Example.

Try to act in ways you'd be proud to see Moppet copy, now and when she's grown up. Especially at this age, Moppet learns from your example. For instance, if Moppet hears you lie to others, she will learn to tell lies even if you punish her for lying to you. If you punish her for hitting another child by spanking, she'll learn that hitting (spanking) is an acceptable action. If you are concerned about Moppet's feelings, needs, and rights, she'll learn to show the same concern for others.

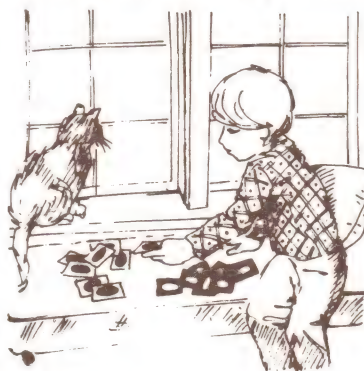
2) Be Fair. Try to be fair in your discipline. Give Moppet a fair hearing when she does something wrong. Let her tell her point of view. Make your "punishment fit the crime." For example, if Moppet breaks one of her own toys, the loss of the toy is punishment enough. She doesn't need a spanking or to be told she's careless or clumsy. If you point out to her—with kindness and sympathy—that this is why you sometimes remind her to be careful, she'll learn the lesson much more readily than if

you make her feel bad. Perhaps she'll even listen to you when you caution her in the future.

3) Remember the Golden Rule.

Next time you reprimand or punish Moppet when she misbehaves, think about how you would feel if you were in her shoes: Would you feel hurt, misunderstood, or angry if someone treated you the way you are treating her? Or would you feel they understood your point of view even though they weren't pleased with what you'd done? When someone yelled at you or made you feel bad because you'd misbehaved, what did you learn? Did you learn to commit acts for which you were punished when you thought you could get away with it? Did you learn to hide the truth from your parents in order to avoid punishment? Wouldn't you rather that your Moppet trust you rather than be afraid of you and that she learn not to do something because she understands why it's wrong rather than from fear of punishment? If so, try to remember to treat her as you, yourself, would like to be treated.

4) Discipline with Kindness and Respect. When Moppet makes a mistake, let her know you don't like what she did without making her feel she's a bad person for doing it. For example, if she hits her baby brother, take her aside and explain that you won't



allow her to hit him even though you understand how mad she gets when he takes her toys or interrupts her games. Listen to her side of the story, and try to work out a solution to the problem together. Try not to

make her feel guilty and ashamed. We all make mistakes, and mistakes are an excellent opportunity to learn better ways of behaving.

5) Accent the Positive. Let Moppet know you appreciate her doing things that are important to you. For example, thank her for helping you keep the house neat by cleaning up her toys and clothes. If she forgets, gently remind her that it makes your work harder when you have to do all the work yourself, and ask for her help. Compliment her when she takes responsibility for herself in any way, even if her efforts are awkward. Point out the times she does things the way you've asked. For example, thank her when she asks for something instead of whining.

6) Minimize the Negative. Pay more attention to the things Moppet does well than to her mistakes. Without thinking, we often take for granted those behaviors of others that please us. Then we exaggerate out of proportion the things they do wrong. This approach can backfire with Moppet, because children tend to repeat those behaviors that get the most attention. For example, the more you ask Moppet to stop an annoying habit such as playing with her food, the more she may do it. Try ignoring it instead. Then, when you notice her eating neatly, compliment her. It won't take long before you begin to see a change.

7) Explain Your Expectations.

Let Moppet know what you expect of her. Try to keep your expectations fair, reasonable, and sensible. But, even if they're not, spell them out to Moppet. If she knows what you expect of her, it will be easier for her to please you and avoid your disapproval. You will avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and hurt feelings. For example, explain that you expect her to be in bed by a time that is acceptable to you. Let her know that she can lie in bed quietly for a short time before going to sleep. Offer to read or tell her a story

or just talk with her during that time if she wishes. But explain that you will not want to spend the time with her if you have to spend time every night reminding her to go to bed. Let her know what you expect and what she can expect when she doesn't fulfill her part of the bargain.

8) Be Consistent. Decide what's important to you. Then, try to be consistent in your expectations and responses. For example, suppose you set up a rule that you don't want Moppet playing on the living room furniture with her shoes on. Don't let her do it one day when you are feeling good and yell at her the next because she's getting on your nerves. Try to remind her, gently but firmly, that you do not want her to do it, and ask her to leave the living room until she can do as you ask. Thank her when she remembers to take off her shoes.

9) Cultivate Patience. No matter how much you love her, there will be times when Moppet's behavior will exasperate you. Try to remember that she will never be this age again and that this, too, will pass. Let her know how you feel when what she does upsets you. But try to keep your sense of humor and perspective. Be patient with Moppet's attempts to do things for herself. She may not do them well at first, but she'll learn with practice. Like every other skill, responsibility for oneself takes practice and lots of room for mistakes before it's mastered.

10. Think; Don't React. When we were children, we all swore we'd never treat our children in some of the ways our parents treated us when they got mad. Now that we are parents, we find ourselves reacting in many of those same ways we swore we'd not repeat. Try to remember how you felt when you were small—how easily you could be hurt and frightened by those you depended on for guidance and comfort. Try to think before you react to Moppet. When you do react in a way you think was

unfair or overly harsh, let Moppet know. It's helpful for her to see that you too can make—and acknowledge—mistakes. It will build her trust in you. And it may make her more considerate of your feelings in the future, as well.

It's not always easy to behave as we want toward our children. Try to accept yourself as you are, and do the best you can. No one can be kind, considerate, fair, patient, and respectful, all the time. Be as understanding of yourself as we've asked you to be of Moppet. Just by trying you will succeed, and Moppet will learn from your example.



An Obstacle Course

The objective of an activity such as an obstacle course is to help Moppet develop good relationships in space and the space vocabulary so necessary for academic achievement. This fun device has a lot of utility:

1) It helps children expand their repertoire of motor patterns.

2) It provides the necessary motor experiences to acquire knowledge of the dimensions of space: up/down, left/right, front/back, across, between, around, etc.

3) It offers an opportunity to match the perceptual-motor experience with its language or vocabulary. The child associates the experience in space with the words and internalizes the association so that the words are available for use when similar incidents occur.

4) It allows children to be creative in the design of the course. Why not invite Moppet to create one? We often observe fixed playground where the items cannot be moved in any way. After a while children become bored and even destructive because there is no possibility for change. Any time a great deal of expense is involved there is a reluctance by parents to discard. Using or reusing materials already available allow for change and innovation.

Example of an obstacle course:
Materials:



Innertube or tire



Ladders (upright and flat)



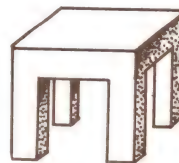
Leaves



Barrels



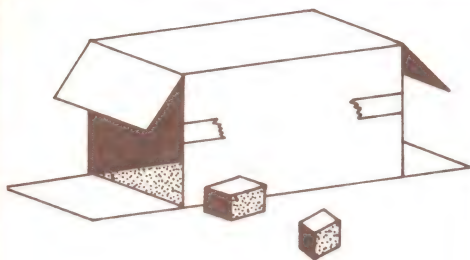
Chairs



Benches and Tables



Slant Board or Cellar Door



Boxes and Blocks



Mudpuddles and Sand



Trees



Sawdust & Wood Shavings

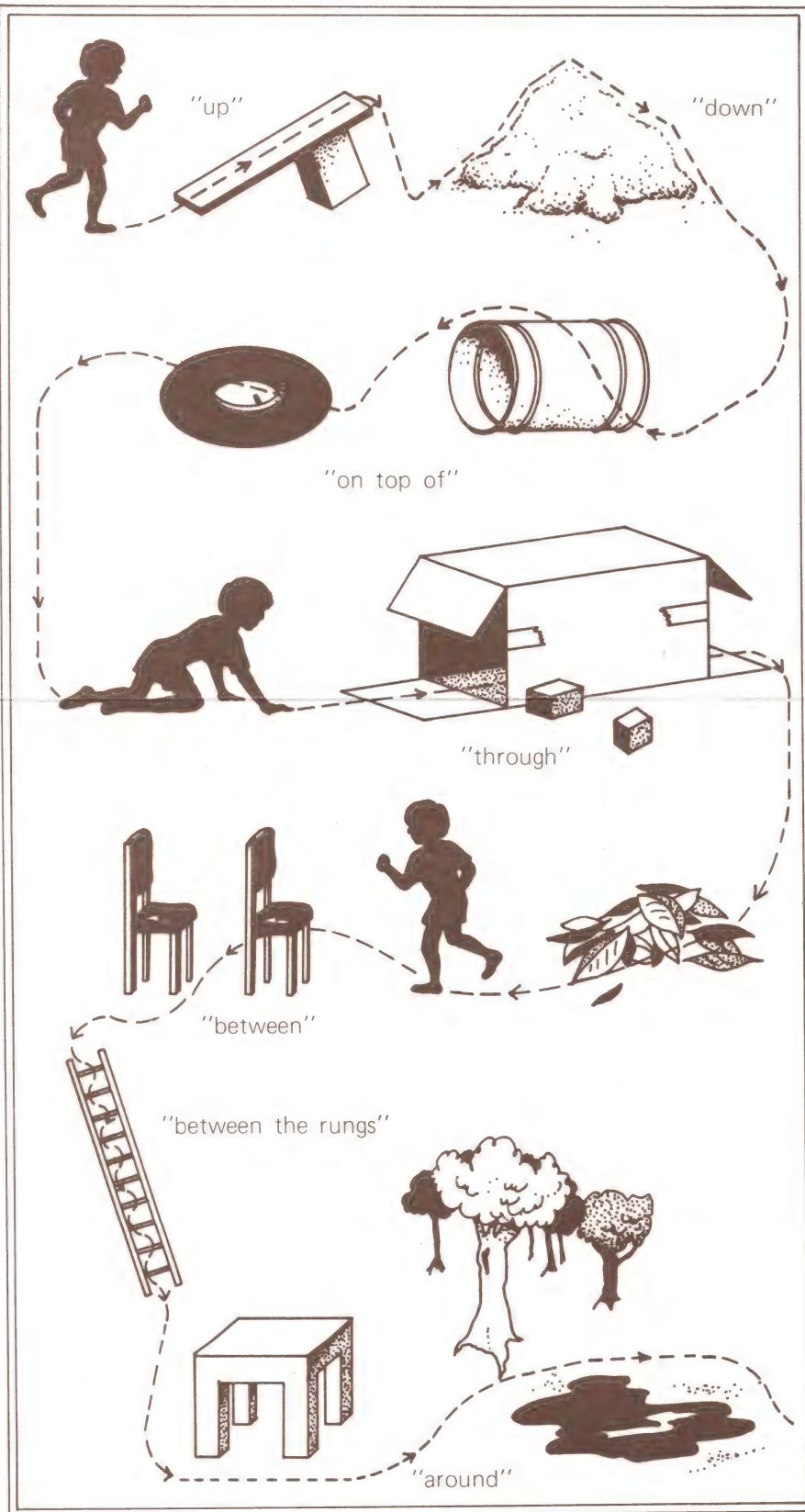
In such a course Moppet will be challenged to move in a variety of postures and styles—"through," "across," "into," "between," "on top of," "under," "next to," etc. These objects can be furniture, outdoor equipment, "white elephants," and junk. Use your imagination, keeping safety in mind.

Some variations: Creeping and crawling through the course; moving forward, sidewise, backward; pushing or pulling objects along with them; riding a bike or pedal car; carrying a shopping carrier, umbrella, pocketbook. You can change the position of the equip-

ment, change the pattern of movement, such as walking through with 2 feet and 1 hand.

When children have mastered

the course, make a new one with their help. It provides hours of fun and more learning than can be measured.



Praise & Criticism

There are two ways to praise a child for something she has done. You can say, as you watch her finish her latest paint work, "Oh what a lovely picture. It looks just like a sunset. You are a good artist." Or you can say, "I like the way the colors drip together. You really used a lot of paint this time."

When you say her painting is a lovely picture, the praise fails to match what the child has actually done. She has been playing around with paint, experimenting with how it works. You say it is a sunset. She knows it isn't, but she keeps that her little secret. She understands that her picture has to be something for you to like it, that practicing with paint isn't worthy of praise. She knows she isn't an artist—but she'll go along to win your praise.

The second way of praise states the obvious: She has used a lot of paint, and you appreciate that; you like the way the colors drip together. What gives her pleasure gives you pleasure too. Her experimenting with color is an admired skill; she did it well. Praising her this way helps her to judge her work appropriately, to feel that what she actually does is valued by people who count.

There are two ways to criticize a child for something he has done. You can say, as his glass of milk spills onto the floor, "Look what you've done. You are so clumsy." Or you can say, "You put your glass too close to the edge of the table. Now help me clean up this mess."

When you tell a child what he is—a clumsy person—you judge him. He is always clumsy, and always will be. There is no way to deal with the spilled milk. That's the way things will always go with him.

But when you tell him exactly what he has done, put the milk in the wrong place where it can be easily spilled, he can judge his action as it really is. He can

avoid spilling his milk like that next time. He has annoyed you, but there is a way to deal with spilled milk—he can help clean up the mess.

No parent, exasperated by mud tracks on the floor ten times in one day, or stepped-on crayons in the rug, or chicken noodle soup all down his front, can resist saying "careless." And most times, by the twentieth scribble, no longer really interested, we say "beautiful" without a thought. But if mothers and fathers can avoid for much of the time praise and criticism that judges the child himself, and instead judge the product, the action, the moment as it really is, a child will become more able to measure his behavior, to pursue what he is good at, to work on what is difficult, to like himself the way he is.



Contributing authors:

Phil Bach
Miriam Bender
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George Early
Robert Hannemann
Sylvia Kottler

Dear Growing Child

"I am an OB nurse, and thought I knew everything about babies. That is until I spent the first night at home with my first!"

I really appreciate the hints you give, the words of encouragement, the play-things presented, and the knowledge that my feelings and my child's development are perfectly normal and shared by thousands of others.

Keep up the good work! May "Growing Child" be as helpful to all the other mothers who read it as it has been to me."

Sincerely,

Martha D.

Cedar Falls, Iowa



Next Month

- Understanding Moppet
- On the Joys of Cutting
- A More Useful Question

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Growing Child®

4 Years
4 Months

Understanding Moppet

There can be some rough spots on Moppet's journey from four to five years. Sometimes she's easy to get along with and to understand. She's curious about the world around her, especially the people in it. She has fun trying to copy people she knows, has heard about, or seen in a movie or on television. She likes to help out.

Sometimes, though, Moppet can be unpredictable and hard to understand. She may get very excited about an activity, only to leave it for another without explanation. Sometimes it may seem as if you've told her the same thing a hundred times, and still she forgets to do what you've asked. She can be adorable one minute and whiny or pouting the next. And, she may—for no apparent reason—begin to be afraid of all sorts of things which never bothered her before.

Why is this happening, and how can you help Moppet—and yourself—get through these rough spots? By trying to see the world through her eyes:

1. Moppet is no longer a baby, so you have expectations of her taking some responsibilities for herself. This is good, and most of the time Moppet probably is proud of doing things for herself. But, (like all of us), there are times when she wishes someone else would take care of everything. This shows up, particularly, if there's a new baby or a younger child from whom less is expected than of Moppet. Don't be afraid you'll "spoil her by giving in to her whims." Try to understand how she feels and let her know you do: "You don't want to put away your toys now. You're tired and you wish I'd do it for you. Let's pick them up

together and put them in this bag. We'll put them away later."

2. Moppet is not yet old enough to do many of the things she'd like to do. This is made harder if Moppet has older brothers and sisters who are allowed privileges she's denied. For example, she may want to go out without supervision. She may even run away from home or slip out on her own while you're not looking. Naturally, if this happens, you're going to be upset and worried, perhaps angry. Be honest with Moppet about your feelings, but try, also, to let her know you understand her feelings. "You wanted to go out by yourself like the big kids. You got mad when I wouldn't let you.

So you went anyway. I understand how you feel, but I can't let you go out alone. I get very worried and upset that something might happen to you."

3. Moppet is having a hard time finding her place in the world. It isn't easy to be "in-between"—too young for some things and too old for others. It's not just that she isn't allowed to do things. There are many things she can't do. She needs reassurance and encouragement to help her see the things about herself that are special. Compliment her, for example, on how good she is at making other people feel happy or on what a wonderful smile she has. Moppet needs your help to see and develop her own special talents. For example, tell her how much you love to hear her sing her "made-up songs," and ask her if she'd sing a little each day with you (let her teach you). Moppet also needs your patient understanding when she gets overwhelmed and frustrated by tasks that are too big for her. Explain that every-

one has trouble doing some things and offer to help out if she wants. But don't take over; that will only increase her feelings of incompetence.



4. At this age, Moppet sometimes has a hard time keeping her mind focused on one idea or activity for a long time. For example, she may start out drawing a picture she says is supposed to be a car. By the time she finishes her drawing, it may have changed identities several times. Or she might tell you a story in which each thing she says makes her think of something else, so she never completes any of her thoughts. Don't worry about this. As she nears five, Moppet's thinking will become more organized and conventional, and she'll be able to pay attention to an activity for a longer time. For now, encourage her to stick with things she's begun, but be flexible. Don't force children this age to follow too rigid or structured a schedule. This is a time when they use their minds in creative ways, and they need to practice these thinking skills.

5. Moppet's memory, at this stage, may not be as good as you think it should be. This can cause problems when you give her too many directions at one time. For example, if you say to her, "Go upstairs and get your hat,

your coat and your gloves. While you're up there, don't forget to put away the toys you left in the hallway. Then get your little brother and we'll go to the store," she's likely to forget at least some part of what you told her. The most she can pay attention to and remember is two to four things. She'll remember more if the instructions are short, simple, and related to one another. She'll remember better when she's really paying attention. She'll do this naturally when it's something important to her. Otherwise, you'll need to take the time to tell her what you want, slowly, and ask her to repeat it. Try to be understanding if she still forgets. Her memory will improve with practice and as she gets older.

6. Moppet can be moody when things don't go her way. Her mood can change quickly from joyful to angry, for example, if someone doesn't pay attention to her or if she can't make a toy work the way she wants. Often you may not even know why she's upset. She has an idea inside her head of what she expects. When her expectations aren't met, she might mope or pout or stomp about without ever letting you know why. Try to put yourself in her shoes and see if you can figure out the problem: "I'll bet you're mad because you're tired of waiting for me to get off the phone." Be sympathetic, even if you don't think her reason is important. It's important to her, and if she feels you understand, she'll get over her moodiness fairly quickly.

7. Moppet is becoming more aware of how little control she really has over her life and the people in it. This can make her behave in some pretty "bratty" ways at times. She may try to boss other people around, both adults and children. Let her know you don't like being bossed around any more than she does. Tell her you'll try to be fair with her but you expect her to be fair, too, with you and others. Give her as much control as you

can in as many areas of her life as possible. For example, give her choices in the clothes you buy for her. Let her pick out what she wants to wear even if you don't always approve of her selection. Try not to pressure her, even by the tone of your voice, into doing things your way. If you've decided she has to do something a particular way, tell her—directly—what you expect. If a choice is possible, really give her the choice, and don't try to influence her. Be honest and direct. Don't make Moppet guess what you expect and then get upset if she doesn't meet your expectations.

8. Moppet may be developing fears of things that never used to bother her. This is because of her feelings of powerlessness. She doesn't have the complete protectiveness she had as a baby (nor should she). But she's not capable of caring for herself in many ways. She knows just enough about the world around her to feel there are many things she can't control and doesn't understand. Thus, she fears lots of things but especially the unknown—loud noises, dark places, strange looking people, perhaps some unfamiliar places and things. Some of Moppet's fears may seem silly to you. Try to understand that they are very real to her. Don't try to talk her out of her fears by telling her, "There's nothing to be afraid of. It can't hurt you." And don't accuse her of being a baby for being afraid. We all get afraid sometimes. You will help Moppet overcome her fears best if you let her know you understand and that it's all right to be afraid. Let her explain to you what frightens her and ask how you can help.

As a general rule the best way to understand and help out your Moppet is by trying to put yourself in her shoes. Try to remember your own thoughts and feelings when you were a child. Try to treat her as you liked being treated. Be honest and straightforward with her about how her

behavior affects you and try to understand how your behavior affects her. Assert your own rights and needs, but not at Moppet's expense. She is too young to stand up for her own needs, rights, and feelings so you have to protect them for her. As you treat her, you plant the seed of her treatment of her own children and others close to her.



A More Useful Question

Questions are useful things. They are how we remind our child of what we assume he hasn't done: "Have you hung your coat up?" "Have you fed the cat?" They are how we tell our child what we hope he feels, how we hope he behaved: "Did you have a nice day at school today?" "Were you a good girl?" And sometimes, when we ask how many, what color, why this, who that, questions are how we test to see if our child knows the "right" answer—the one we already know.

And yet questions like these, useful as they are to remind, sway, test, are also traps. Because no, she hasn't hung up her coat, and she isn't sure what color the ribbon is. She's wrong or in the wrong. Caught again.

There is a knack, and it can be learned, to asking questions that don't trap, or make a child feel pushed or dumb or bad, but instead invite confidence, indicate interest, become conversation. The knack is in asking, honestly, for answers you can't know beforehand.

"What do you think happens," you ask, "when everyone has bought all the milk in the store, and there isn't any left?"

"The man in the store makes more," he says.

"I've never seen him make milk, have you?"

"I saw Mrs. Pickford make milk."

No wrong answers here, because the mother couldn't know what her child thought or saw until he said it. She is learning that her

Play Things

4 years 4 months

The importance of social interaction

Learning more about the outside world

Your child is almost 4½ years old and soon she'll be entering kindergarten, then first grade. Even if she has had experience in a day care setting, school is a major turning point in every child's social development.

Your child's social involvement with other children and adults is growing every day. Learning how to interact with other people in a variety of situations will play a vital role in your child's developing personality.

The variety of items we're offering for four- and five-year-olds allows your child the opportunity to interact with others, to learn to take turns, to win with grace and lose without frustration, to respect and be considerate of others' feelings, and to learn more about other people, places, and things.

These kinds of experiences are what will help your child feel more comfortable with others, have a positive self-esteem, and enjoy school experiences during these important preschool years.



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A Suzette and Nicholas and the Seasons Clock,

by Satomi Ichikawa.

Seasons represent time, the order of our year, science, and the changes in nature that take place in our world.

Join Suzette and Nicholas as they discover the special delights each season brings. Four individual stories and exquisite pictures help Youngster learn about the changes that occur throughout the year.

Originally published in French, this book has been translated so even more children could enjoy it. Instructions are included for your child to make his own seasons clock.

Ichikawa's imaginative artwork is known and loved by adults and children throughout the world.

Hardbound, 8½" × 11", full color, 26 pp.

3-6 yrs.

US344 \$9.00



B Numberland

Here's a fun board game for children that teaches number concepts, too!

As your child learns to match colors, shapes, and pictures, these skills become the basis for learning about numbers.

Beginning "counters" are introduced to the numbers 1-10 as each player wanders through **Numberland**, matching three-dimensional numbers to pictures in the Forest of Four, the Circus of Seven, and more.

The game is based on luck, so parents and children with different skill levels can easily play together. All of the playing equipment can also be used separately as teaching aids.

There are numerous board games on the market. . . this is one your child will learn from as well as enjoy!

169 playing pieces, 18½" board, 2-4 players.

4-8 yrs.

USV5 \$10.00



C CALDECOTT MEDAL/HONOR Robert McCloskey Classics

What better way to introduce three classics to your child's library than with this special set?

Your child will delight in the adventures of: A duck family that journeys through Boston; a version of the traditional runaway gingerbread boy; and a little girl who gets mixed up with a bear cub while picking blueberries. Each story has that simple humor youngsters love and realistic illustrations that allow them to tell the stories by "reading" the pictures.

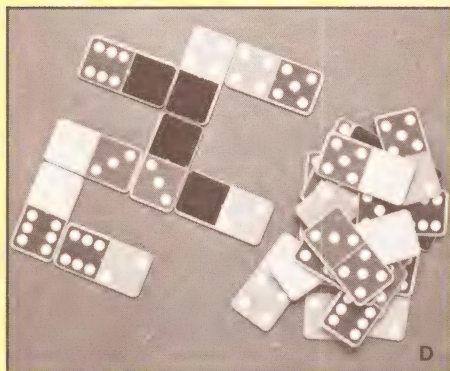
All of these books have been honored as Caldecott award-winners for distinguished picture book illustrations and have been "read-again-favorites" with preschoolers for over 30 years.

Paperback, 7" × 8¾", 1 and 2 color, 45-62 pp.

3-6 yrs.

US325 Set of three \$12.00

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D **Dominos**
 Here's an excellent introduction to dominoes for your child. This set has the right number of pieces, the pieces are a good size for small hands, and colors are used as well as numbers. Youngster can first match the pieces by color, and later by the dots when she understands "how many."

Matching helps your child to build visual perception, notice details, and make associations—elements which help her learn to read and write.

There's a solitaire version Youngster can play alone, or the game can be played with others. This introduces social play (taking turns, winning and losing, playing fairly), as well as learning to do something independently.

28 pieces, 2" X 4". 4 yrs. and up.
US\$17 **\$8.00**

E **Recipes for Fun and Learning,**
 by Carolyn B. Haas.

When all your child can say is "What can I do now?" you'll be glad to have this book.

Here are 75 creative projects, under such categories as reading readiness, nature and science, and arts and crafts.

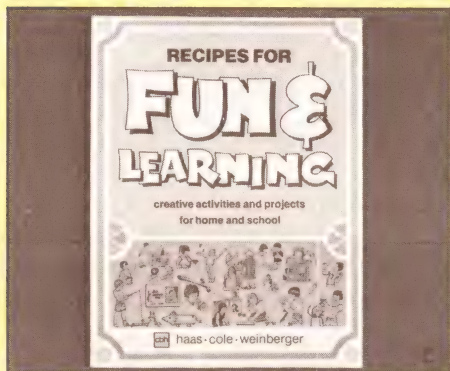
The big, easy-to-read format of the book invites participation and the materials needed are those you'd have around the house. A handy contents page lists ages, learning concepts, and skills for each project—making this activity book a worthwhile purchase for your child's development.

Paperback, 8½" X 11", black and white, 75 pp.
 3-8 yrs.

US\$260 **\$6.00**

F **Role Playing Puzzles**

Children love to make something and then play with it. With this set, there are two different puzzles for each role presented: A jigsaw puzzle that follows the sequence of each job, and a three-dimensional put-together kit that represents each occupation.



Plus, these puzzles offer the opportunity to discuss and learn about each activity: Fishing, farming, mailing a letter, and making wool.

All the parts combine to encourage storytelling, picture-matching, manipulative skills, arranging events in sequence, pretend-play, and learning about the world.

4-8 yrs.
US\$15 **\$6.00**

G **CLASSIC Newbery Honor**
Millions of Cats, by Wanda Ga'g.

Here's a funny tale that illustrates the rewards of modesty and the ill fate of conceit.

An elderly couple decides to get a cat. When the old man ventures out to find one though, he stumbles onto "millions of cats!"

Your child will want to hear this story again and again. The rhyme and rhythm build language and vocabulary skills and you'll find him chanting along with the verses.

One of the few preschool books awarded for its literary content, this book is over 50 years old and its message is still applicable today.

Paperback, 9½" X 6½", black and white, 29 pp.
 4-8 yrs.

US\$3 **\$4.00**

H **Build 'n' Play**

This is a BIG construction set your child can use to make his own life-size playthings. With 87 strong pieces, plus "tools," the opportunities for building and rebuilding toys are endless.

Youngster gets experience in construction as well as imaginative play. Once completed, Youngster can use the items he builds as accessories for his own make-believe play.

Life-size toys help your child feel that he has something of his very own. By playing with a toy he's made, your child can say, "This is my table"—a very important and positive step towards self-esteem and security.

Sturdy plastic. Red cube, 7" square. 4-8 yrs.
US\$14 **\$45.00**



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child has ideas about where milk comes from—maybe Mrs. Pickford was making powdered milk; maybe she was mixing formula from a can; maybe she was even nursing her baby. The mother will find out by asking more. The child will find out that people can discuss things, and figure them out together. Perhaps his mother will point out to him a milk truck on the street. Or take him to a farm zoo to see a cow. Or show him a mother cat feeding her kittens.

A child can't give you a "wrong" answer to questions like these—he can only tell you what he thinks. When you understand what he thinks, you can help him to understand more. And that, after all, is a more useful question.



On the Joys of Cutting

Breathes there a child with soul so dead, as never to himself hath said—"What can I cut now? I'll cut my hair!"

This may be an almost sacrilegious paraphrase of some famous words, but I hope it will convey our meaning. Once a child has learned to use scissors—and surely by age four years he has a blunt-pointed pair of his own—his very nature impels him to experiment to see what things scissors can cut.

Four already knows that he can cut paper. He has seen his mother cut cloth and string and he has been warned about using his scissors (or any others he can reach) to snip at clothing, drapes, towels or other household items. But no one has said not to cut hair. In fact, by this time he has had his hair trimmed with scissors by Mommy or Daddy, a barber or a beautician. He knows that hair is cuttable and that from time to time hair cutting is desirable. So he or she experiments on his own hair—or on another child—or sometimes even on the family dog!

When Four cuts his/her own hair, he usually manages only to

cut it off across the front plus a little more on the left side. The only reason he doesn't cut more off on the right side is because he is probably using right-handed scissors and has trouble getting them positioned to cut. Of course, the longer Four's hair, the easier it is for him to get a good grip on a lock of hair and hold it for cutting. But where Four cuts he usually cuts it short because he steadies the scissors against his head as he cuts. The results can be horrifying, enraging or hilarious depending upon how you look at it.

After Four has cut his hair, he feels quite virtuous. Mommy will be pleased because he has shown so much independence. And he won't have to sit in that high chair while someone else cuts his hair. All in all, Four is quite pleased with his performance—and not only that, his head feels so much cooler in front!

Enter Mommy who, depending on her nature—and her self-control—may go into shock, burst into tears and wail, "Oh, darling! What have you done to your beautiful hair? Mommy was so proud of her (pretty, handsome) Four—and now look at you! How could you do that to yourself? You look awful! I can hardly stand to look at you!"

Or—she may fly into a rage and scream, "Four! What have you done! I'll teach you not to go around cutting with scissors, you bad (boy, girl)! Don't you ever do anything like that again!" SMACK! "Just wait 'til I tell your father!"

Or—Mother may be appalled at the moth-eaten or partially-scalped appearance of her handsome child but control her panic because she knows that hair grows faster than a child and that a child's feelings of self-worth are more important than a temporarily funny haircut. She may react something like this—

"Oh—you've cut your hair. I didn't know you could handle scissors so well. —Let me look

at you. It's a lot shorter in some places, isn't it? Never mind, we'll even it off for you."



Then, "You know, Four, you did a pretty good job of cutting for a little (boy, girl) but next time, let's let someone cut your hair who can see all around your head at the same time. I don't cut my own hair and Daddy doesn't cut his own hair. We let someone else do it and you had better let someone else cut your hair, too, from now on!"

Which child has learned something constructive about hair-cutting? Which child feels like a worthwhile person?

Now, suppose that instead of cutting his/her own hair, your Four has been given the haircut by another child or has himself been the "stylist." This time most of the cutting will be done across the back of the head. This isn't so bad if the child "styled" is a boy. He can always be given a short haircut all over. So what if he does look "square" instead of "mod" for awhile. It's only a temporary thing and hair soon grows. The event may be more catastrophic if the back-scalping was done to a little girl whose hair has been painstakingly coaxed to shoulder length or below. Even so a good beautician can transform the scalped one into a short haired prince/princess with a shingle bob—and time heals all. Hair does grow again!

Of course, if the "barber" is your child and the patron is your friend's child, things may be a little different. The best you can do is to apologize to your friend, cry a little with her and offer to pay for necessary

professional re-styling.

Equally "of course", you will explain firmly to both children that hair is to be cut only by grown-ups and that scissors are used by children only to cut paper except when Mommy or Daddy is there to help! No one has been "bad" but there will be no more volunteer haircuts given!



Language & Movement

Here's a little movement game to teach the directional concepts "up", "down", "half-way."



The Merry Old Duke of York

The merry old Duke of York; he had 10,000 men, (hold hands at chest level in a horizontal position and move them back and forth).

He marched them up to the top of the hill (extend arms above head),

And he marched them down again (drop arms below waist level.)

And when they were up, they were up (extend arms above head)

And then they were down, they were down (drop arms below waist level).

And when they were only half-way up (hold hands at chest level),

They were neither up nor down. (extend arms above head, and then drop them below waist level.)

Fingerplays

Procedure: Start with a fisted hand. Each finger is extended from the fist until all five fingers are extended. Now the motions

can be reversed starting with five fingers extended and finishing with a fist.

"The Little Frog"

This little frog broke his toe,
This little frog said, "Oh, oh."
This little frog laughed and was glad;
This little frog cried and was sad.
This little frog did just as he should,
He ran for the doctor as fast as he could!

The same procedure can be used with this fingerplay:

"Five Little Kittens"

The first little kitten said, "I smell a mouse."
The second little kitten said, "Let's hunt through the house."
The third little kitten said, "Let's play we're asleep."
The fourth little kitten said, "Let's go creepity creep."
The fifth little kitten said, "Meow, meow, meow. I saw him run in his hole just now."

Here's a two-handed fingerplay:

"Making Balls"

Here's a ball (make a circle touching thumb and tip of forefinger),
And here's a ball (touch middle fingers and thumb tips.)
And a great big ball I see (touch fingers of both hands and extend arms high overhead.)
Shall we count them?
Are you ready?
One, two, three (make balls following the three movement used above.)



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Dear Growing Child

"I wanted to let you know how much I appreciate Growing Child. (Our son) is our first child, and although I'm a nurse and have worked with children, there's nothing like one's own child to teach us how little we really know about children. Growing Child has given me some wonderful guidelines and I recommend it often."

Margaret K.
Pittsburgh, PA

"I just wanted to tell you how grateful we are for your publication. Though I have many books on child-rearing, I welcome the newsletter each month. There's always something new to be learned in it."

Cynthia W.
Detroit, MI



Next Month

- A Memory Book for Moppet
- Logical Thinking—How Early is "Early"
- School Readiness

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4 Years
7 Months

Helping Moppet Get Ready To Read

Some children learn to read with ease in the preschool years. Others still may not be ready to read in the first grade. It's important to respect each child's particular interests and skills. As we've said so often, it's important not to push Moppet to read before he's ready and eager for the task. However, there are games you can play and enjoy with Moppet now which will help him get ready to read. There is practice with words you can give Moppet which will help him when he goes to school.

Does your Moppet recognize his favorite foods in the grocery store by their wrappers or boxes? This is a good sign that he's ready for some prereading games. The grocery store is a rich storehouse of prereading materials.

One of the skills Moppet needs in order to read is the ability to recognize the general appearance of a particular word and distinguish it from others. For example, the word cookies looks different from the word vegetables even if you don't know how to read either one or the letters which make it up. Grocery store items and packages make good material for learning this skill because each product has clues such as color and package design which help distinguish it from other products. Many products are easily recognized because of their well-known or unique trademark or symbols. These cues can help Moppet recognize a familiar product before he can actually read the name of it.

There are many fun games you and Moppet can play, using materials for advertising and packaging foods and other products

commonly found in the supermarket or grocery store. We will describe a few, and you and Moppet will probably invent and create more of your own. For these games you will need to begin saving the following materials: empty boxes and cans, labels from cans and bottles, and magazine ads. Save duplicate and additional examples of products. This will allow you to have ones just like those in the store (open them from the bottom so they'll appear like the store's) and duplicates which you can cut and paste for use as game materials for Moppet's learning.



To prepare your materials, you and Moppet should cut (from labels, boxes, or advertisements) the name and symbols of products you commonly use. Make the "cut-outs" large enough that Moppet can easily recognize the product. Mount each one on a large index card or on pieces of lightweight cardboard. Try to make at least five cards for each product-name so you can use them in different games. Following are a few games you can play with these materials.

1. Card Games. Give Moppet several product-name cards. Keep in your own hand at least twice as many cards, including duplicates of the ones you gave Mop-

pet. Hold up one of your cards and ask, "Do you have Campbell's Tomato Soup?" (or whatever name card you have). If Moppet correctly states that he has a duplicate, he can take your product-name card and put that pair aside. When he has no more cards in his hand, he wins. Then he can be the "caller." You can make up many variations of this game as Moppet's skill increases. Later, you can play the same games using cards which have letters and words like those he will have to learn and use in school. When you make your master set using words, put a picture describing the word on your cards. This will give Moppet an extra clue to use in matching his cards to yours.

2. Lotto. Cut several pieces of lightweight cardboard four times as big as the product-name cards you've got. Divide each one into four squares, and paste a product name label on each square. Give Moppet a lotto card and four matching product-name cards. Show him how to match each product-name card to the space on the lotto card containing its match. If he can do this easily, give him several lotto cards plus all the matching product-name cards and let him play on his own. Let him show you his finished lotto cards to check that he's matching them correctly. As his skill increases, make up some new lotto cards with eight or more squares. Also, you can increase the game's challenge by making the product-names on each card similar to each other (for example, four different kinds of Campbell's soup labels).

3. Pocket Wall Chart. Divide a large piece of lightweight cardboard into sixteen squares. On each square, paste another piece of lightweight cardboard on three

sides, leaving the top open to form a pocket. These pockets should be large enough to hold one of the product-name cards you made up before. On the outside of each pocket, paste a product-name label to match one of the product-name cards you have. Give Moppet the product-name cards to put into their correctly matching pockets. If you have enough product-name cards to spare, you can attach a large envelope to the bottom of the chart to hold the cards permanently. Then Moppet can play the game whenever he likes!

4. Bingo. Make bingo cards from lightweight cardboard. Mark each card into nine squares. Leave the center square "free", and paste eight product-name labels on the other squares. Cut a piece of lightweight cardboard into squares to make markers to cover the product-names on the cards. Call out a product-name and show Moppet how to cover the square of the name you called with a marker. When Moppet has covered a row of squares up and down, across or diagonally, he wins and can say Bingo! At first, call out only product-names that are on Moppet's bingo card. Later you can make the game harder and call out names that are not on his card.

This game will be harder for Moppet than the previous ones. He has to find the written word on hearing its name; he doesn't have the visual clue, too, as he did in the card game. If he has a lot of difficulty, give him some more practice with card games first. Bingo will be even more fun for Moppet if a friend or an older brother or sister joins the fun. Let everybody have a turn being "caller." If Moppet enjoys bingo, you can make up other cards with his help, using letters, words, and pictures.

5. Grocery Store. Set up an area of your home like a small grocery store, putting the empty cans and boxes you have saved on shelves low enough for Moppet to reach. Make labels of



lightweight cardboard that identify a general category of food or other products (soup, vegetables, fruit, cereal, soap, cookies, etc.) Put the labels on the shelves, and remove all the cans and boxes. Have Moppet restock the shelves according to category. Help out as he needs, but let him do the work. This activity will give Moppet practice in classification as well as reading skills as he figures out where to put the canned peaches, the detergent, and the other products.

Direct Moppet to "buy" different items: "Get me one can of tuna fish and a box of cream of wheat." As you increase the number of instructions, you'll be giving Moppet practice and experience in paying attention and remembering. But don't expect him to remember more than three to five things at a time..

Make cards with shopping lists. At first, use cut-out labels on the lists. Later try just printing the names. This will be more difficult for Moppet because the printed words and names will not contain the actual visual clues (color, size and shape of letters and the design style, trademark symbols, etc.) as the product-name cards or the products themselves. However, using just the printed name will help stimulate Moppet's beginning reading skills. Give Moppet a shopping list and a box or basket as a grocery cart. Then let him "go shopping." When he is done, check him out at a pretend cash register. Check to see if his groceries match the names on

his shopping list. Moppet can even help in making future "shopping lists." This will help Moppet learn about the things needed and used about the house. At the same time this is a good opportunity for you and Moppet to chat and work cooperatively at something that is important to the family.

As you and Moppet play these games you will get a better idea of which kinds he most enjoys as well as what things give him difficulty and which are easy for him. Remember to keep the games fun and challenging but not too hard. The goal is to increase Moppet's interest and reading readiness as you show him that reading is important, useful and fun! He should feel good about his skill, understanding that it will increase with practice and use. Help him not to become discouraged or frustrated with the tasks. Don't forget to praise him when he does well and to give him a chance to "pat himself on the back" for a job well done. If you discover a game you've planned is too hard for Moppet now, just put it aside and go back to something more familiar that he's already done successfully. Help him keep a feeling about himself of "I can!"



Science With Water

Children are natural scavengers, so why not make them collectors for a purpose? Suggest that Moppet look about for things that are expendable—sticks, popsicle sticks, leaves, stones, egg shells, nuts, pencil, straws, aluminum plates, etc. The objective is to predict whether or not each of these objects will float. To test the prediction, a large dishpan with water must be available to check the floating vs. sinking objects.

In addition to the actual experiment, Moppet will learn about the language counterpart of water. For example, you can discuss the different sounds made by water—

Play Things

4 years 7 months

The importance of music in a child's life

Songs to listen to and learn from

Imagine a world without music. There would be nothing to sing, nothing to listen to, no instruments to play. We take music for granted—whether it's listening to the car radio or humming a song to pass the time. Life would be much different without it.

The more your child understands and appreciates music, the more he can enjoy it. It's in our nature to be musical—our voices allow us to sing, the rhythm in our bodies helps us to keep a beat, and over the centuries, all kinds of musical instruments and technologies have been invented to "make music."

What we're saying is simple—children should be exposed to music just the same as art, literature, or science. It entertains your child, expands his knowledge, and builds self-esteem. Music written especially for children strengthens language, vocabulary, rhyme, rhythm, and memory.

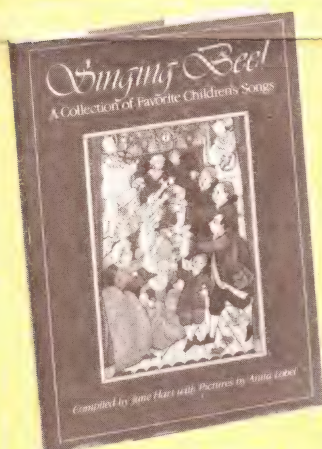
We can't all be a Mozart, McCartney, or Sinatra, *but* your child can listen—and learn—and enjoy!



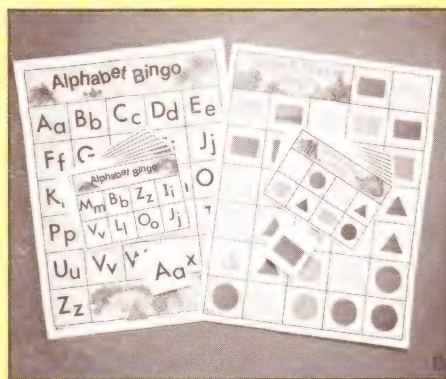
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A
Family
Treasure



A **Singing Bee**, compiled by Jane Hart. This complete musical edition contains over 120 children's songs to introduce your child to the fascinating world of music.

The words, piano accompaniments, and guitar chords are given for finger games, folk songs, rounds, holiday songs, bedtime songs and lullabies, counting and singing games, quiet and lively songs, and many new melodies for Mother Goose rhymes.

This is an excellent book for the whole family to share. Piano accompaniments have been lowered to a more singable key for children. The rhyme and repetition in these tunes are perfect for language and vocabulary development.

Decorative illustrations highlight each song, making them even more meaningful for your child.

Hardbound, 8 1/4" X 11", full color/black and white, 160 pp. All ages.

TT222 \$18.00

B **Color and Shape/ABC Bingo Set** What child doesn't enjoy the fun of shouting "Bingo!"?

This set offers two versions, giving your child double the fun and double the learning!

Playing games like bingo helps children learn to form mental images and helps develop memory and logical thinking skills. This kind of process enables a child to make a match between the words she hears ("red triangle") and the red triangle she sees.

The big size of the caller's charts make them excellent to use as posters for your child's room.

Suggestions are included for many variations, adding more play variety and more value for your money.

Eight calling cards each, 18" X 14" caller's charts, calling cards and markers, 3-8 players. 4 yrs. and up.

TTU18 \$10.00

C **Jason Bear**

Don't you remember a favorite toy from your childhood that never left your side?

This friendly teddy is soft and huggable, providing a sense of security and companionship for your little one.

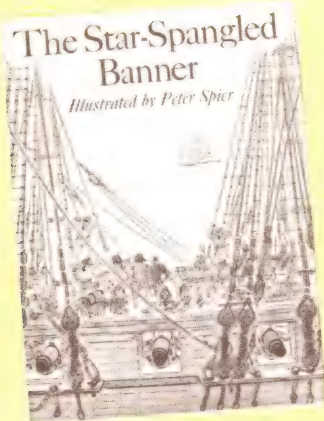
Children need "security toys" like **Jason Bear**. They're a friend to take everywhere, someone who's always ready to play, and best of all, someone to care for and love.

Jason was our choice over all the other teddy bears we've seen because of his irresistible charm, unbelievably soft plush material, and outstanding value. A traditional favorite, he's sure to become a treasured part of your child's own special memories.

Machine washable, non-allergenic. 14" tall. All ages.

TTE23 \$12.00

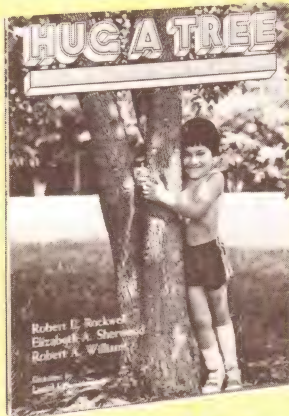
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D The Star-Spangled Banner, illustrated by Peter Spier.
A Reading Rainbow Book
 The complete lyrics of our national anthem have been translated into these glowing illustrations.
 Inspiration has been backed up by careful research and observation so that every detail bears the mark of authenticity.
 Included is a historical section about how the song came to be written, a reproduction of the original manuscript, and a pictorial history of the U.S. flags. Music and guitar chords are also provided.
 A beautiful and important addition to any family's library collection.
 Hardbound, 9" x 12 1/4", full color, 47 pp.
 All ages.
TT367 \$13.00

E My Grandmother Went to Market
 Can you remember what she bought? This is a traditional game where players must remember and recite an ever-growing list of Grandma's purchases. The special feature of our version is that each item is shown on a separate card with the picture on one side and the printed word on the back.
 This is an enjoyable challenge for your child—he builds memory, concentration, and language skills—plus it's fun to play!
 The cards are versatile enough to be used for learning and naming objects, sorting into categories, and word recognition.
 112 cards in storage tray, 2-6 players, 4-10 yrs.
TTQ12 \$10.00

F Hug A Tree, by Robert A. Rockwell.
 Has your child ever taken a bird to lunch? Or measured the wind? Introduce Youngster to the great outdoors with this fascinating activity book.
 You don't need a forest preserve—just a place



where there's plant life. Listed for each activity: directions, suggested materials, appropriate age range, additional ideas, key words to learn, and follow-up suggestions.

Over half of the activities are designed for children four years and up, but some can be enjoyed by two- and three-year olds.

Paperback, 8 1/2" x 11", black and white, 106 pp. 2-10 yrs.
TT270 \$9.00

G Basic Rhythm Instruments
 With *real* instruments like these, (not just toys), and your child's inborn sense of rhythm, she becomes an active participant in musical activities instead of just a listener.

We've put together this exclusive assortment of instruments as a "starter set" for your child. Included are 8 1/2" hardwood claves, a higher pitched sounder with mallet, wrist bells, and unbreakable maracas. There's also a kazoo for added fun.

Your child's songs and records will take on a new meaning when *she* joins in to make her own special music.

3-12 yrs.
TT02 \$10.00

H In Harmony 2
 Finally, a record made for the whole family. Parents will enjoy this one as much as the kids!

"Splish Splash" with Dr. John; "Reach Out and Touch Somebody's Hand" with Teddy Pendergrass; "Sunny Skies" with James Taylor, and "Santa Claus" with Bruce Springsteen.

The 12 popular artists on this record provide a new twist to children's songs. Sing-along and enjoy the simple, appealing qualities of the music.

A royalty from record sales will be donated to the Children's Television Workshop and various children's charities.

10 songs. All ages
TT749 LP \$7.00
TT748 Cassette \$7.00



Our Guarantee

Our Guarantee is simple! We promise 100% satisfaction or your money back, anytime, for any reason. We want you to be completely satisfied with everything you get from Growing Child. **All Growing Child Playthings are sturdy, safe, and non-toxic.**

Toy Cards

A special bonus you'll receive with most Growing Child toys is our exclusive **Toy Card**. These cards help you get maximum play value from every purchase by suggesting games, new uses, and adaptations to hold a child's interest longer and stretch your toy dollar further.



splashing, bubbling, dripping, roaring, trickling, etc. Then there are the visual aspects of water—muddy, dirty, clear, sparkling, "guckie". How about the tactile sensations—hot, cold, lukewarm, icy, fast-running, slow-running. What are the various uses of water—to drink, play in, wash clothes, cook with, water vegetables and gardens, clean windows.



Children need to know that some materials lose their colors in water and others do not. "Fast" colors means they are treated so that the color is fixed into the substance be it paper, fabric or food. Offer Moppet a chance to experiment with real indigo blue denim, colored crepe paper, frozen spinach and hot dogs by placing them each into a pan of water. (The spinach and hot dogs will require boiling water.) Although Red Dye No. 2 is now illegal, there is still a color additive in hot dogs. The discoveries will depend upon the variety of substances used.



Lies or Fantasy?

Four-year-olds are fascinated by words—and love to use them for their sounds as well as for their effect on the listener. Needless to say the results range from amusing to astonishing, if, in fact, the listener is not actually stunned.

At the same time four-year-olds are often great tellers of tales. Four often seems to feel that what he has to say must be bigger and better than life if anyone is to pay attention to it. This is quite understandable when you consider that Four's experiences, although

exciting to him, may be pretty humdrum to adults. Also, what seems very large to Four may, through the experienced eyes of his parents, look pretty small.

So, Four may announce importantly one day, "The blackbirds came today! Jillions and jillions of them, all over our backyard!" Or, shuddering, "Mama, come look! There's a great big 'normous spider on the screen. He's big 'n' black. He's BIG—big as a house!"

Should we put Four down, even indulgently, by saying, "Now, Four, it's not jillion, it's million! And you know that a million blackbirds couldn't get in our backyard!"

What does Four know about "million"—he only knows that it means "a lot" and to him the fifty or so starlings strutting around his backyard is an uncountable number! How much better to acknowledge his important news by saying, "Wow! There must really be a lot of those blackbirds. I'll have to look!" When you share Four's important news he feels important and learns again that language is an important tool of communication. Further, you might add to his knowledge by commenting, "Those are big blackbirds, aren't they? They are called starlings. I wonder what so many of them are doing in our yard?"

Or on the subject of the spider—"Oh, Four! How silly! How could a spider as big as a house sit on the screen! You shouldn't tell such lies!" How much better to accept the fact that it is a bigger-than-usual spider and talk about the fact that most large spiders are garden spiders, that they eat insects, and that the spider is probably more afraid of Four than Four is of the spider!

Why are we as parents and teachers so determined to stamp out exaggeration in favor of the plain, unvarnished truth—in children?

When the radio or television newscaster states that the atten-

dance at the political rally was estimated at 10,000, do you really believe that figure, or do you recognize that the hall was filled and there might have been a few hundred more people milling about outside?

When Father comes home fuming about the "idiot teenager" driving his car down this residential street at 70 miles an hour, do you accept that the speed was excessive for the street? Or do you state factually that this street is only 2 blocks long and the speed jockey could hardly have been going 70 miles an hour?

So it goes—we often expect more exact statements from our four-year-old than we do from newscasters, husbands and friends. We forget that fantasy and exaggeration for effect lend sparkle and interest to our speech. Give children a chance to enjoy the exaggerations of childhood. Never again will things look so big, so bright, so exciting to them. Why not enjoy it with them?



Toys for the Hospitalized Child

Adults must choose discretely toys for the hospitalized youngster. Elaborate, large and complex toys should be avoided. A sick child doesn't usually have the physical or mental energy to work through time consuming and complicated toys. When you make your selection keep the following in mind:

Avoid:

(1) Toys that roll away and can't be retrieved.

(2) Objects that are so small they get lost and thus spoil games or puzzles.

(3) Activities or games that require a partner; nurses are busy, visiting hours are sometimes restricted.

Consider:

(1) Toys that fit within accessible containers or on trays.

(2) Toys and accessories that help the child understand and accept the hospital setting. With play stethoscope, nurse's cap, physician's emblem, miniature

hospital, puppets of medical figures (occupational, physical, respiratory therapists, lab technicians, physician, etc.) the child can role play the hospital experience. In this way the child can help work through the isolation, fear, pain.

(3) Toys not ordinarily chosen because they are preferred by younger children. Stuffed and cuddly animals, picture books, musical toys.



Guessing Games

"Who Am I?"

I give you milk;
I say "moo, moo."
I have four legs
and hamburgers for you!
Who am I?

I lay eggs;
I give other food to eat.
I hatch little babies,
They say "peep, peep."
Who am I?

I have four legs;
I catch mice.
I'm furry and purry,
You say that I'm nice.
Who am I?

Now, not all of these must rhyme. Be creative with everyday foods, events, people.

I have four legs;
My fur is black and white.
I give off a smell when I'm frightened;
I am a _____.

I make honey for you to eat;
I am a _____.



Finger Painting

Finger painting isn't painting; it's pressing and pushing, smearing, scooping, swirling and pulling, curling, sweeping, flicking. It is wriggling up the paper with the edge of your hand, or sawing back and forth. It's twisting a fist or pounding with it, making tiny stirring motions or great sweeping arcs. It's scratching with nails, or flicking, or raking.

Finger painting isn't just for fingers. It's fingertips, sure, but it's palms and knuckles, fists and forearms. It's using hand and arm as a flexible, effective tool. It's technical, and it's magical. Next rainy day instead of packing Moppet off to finger paint, why not get mom and dad involved, too. Moppet will be delighted!



Paint Things

Fingers are fine to paint with, but who wants to do fingerpaintings all the time. Here are a couple of things besides fingers a child can paint with:

1. A moistener. A little plastic tube with a sponge top. It's supposed to save you from licking envelopes and labels and stamps and such, but it's great to paint with. Fill with tempera thinned with a little water. Be sure the top's on tight.

2. Plain old string. Cut lengths 10" or so. Dip string into little dishes or saucers of paint or food coloring. Drag string across the paper, swirl it around, squiggle it up and down. Make wiggly patterns. Make a plaid.

3. An old roll-on deodorant bottle. Pry cap off, rinse and fill with tempera thinned with a little water. Pop cap back on and let 'er roll!



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George Early
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Sylvia Kottler

Dear Growing Child

"My husband and I are both educators, but your publication has certainly educated us!"

"When we had our baby, we came to rely on your publication as an indispensable instruction booklet on how to operate this new little gadget."

"GC has provided us with confidence and some great guidelines on how to influence our little one."

"We sincerely appreciate you."

Mr. & Mrs. D.E.
Brigham City, UT



Next Month

- Fairy Tales
- Understanding & Encouraging Moppet's Special Gifts
- Artful Answers

Growing Child®

11/88

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Growing Child®

4 Years
8 Months

Understanding and Encouraging Moppet's Special Gifts

In *Growing Child* we tend to focus on "normal" growth and development. We tell you what you can expect from Moppet at different ages and how you can help him grow. We also talk regularly about how you can recognize any special learning problems Moppet might have so you can help him cope with them successfully. We think it's equally important that you learn to recognize those special talents your Moppet might have so you can help him develop these skills to their fullest capacity.

A gift is something that Moppet is blessed with as a birthright. It is the seed of a special talent which—with proper nourishment—will grow and flower. How do you know if your Moppet is gifted? What does it mean to be gifted? How can you best help Moppet develop his special gifts? Here are some guidelines that may help you answer these questions:

1. Moppet's giftedness may be expressed in many different ways. If you were told your Moppet was highly gifted, what would you expect? — that he would be able to read, write, or do mathematics far ahead of most children his age? — that he would have a special gift for drawing, acting, or playing a musical instrument? Most people have ideas of giftedness or creativity that are limited to these kinds of talents. In actual fact, arenas of giftedness have no limits. Your Moppet might be especially gifted in using his hands to make things. He could be particularly gifted in his ability to understand other people's feelings. Or his special gift might be an outstanding ability to remember things and

events. Whatever skills a human being can possess is an area of potential creativity for Moppet.

2. Moppet may be highly gifted in one area and average or even below average in another. For example, there is a well-known artist in Japan who is mentally retarded. Though unable to speak well, he is able to communicate very beautifully through his drawing. He was fortunate enough to have a caring and talented teacher who, in searching for a way to reach this man when he was a child, discovered and encouraged his natural talent for drawing. There are some Moppets who are smarter, more talented, better coordinated, and generally more outstanding than most others in everything they try. These are the ones who are most likely to be noticed and labeled as "gifted." But even these Moppets have areas in which they are not outstanding. And there are many more Moppets whose special gifts may go unnoticed because their talent lies in an unexpected area or because they seem ordinary in other ways. It is your challenge, and your responsibility, to discover your Moppet's special gifts and to give him the chance to develop them.

3. Every Moppet has the potential to be creative. Creativity is the way in which Moppet uses his special gifts to express what is unique about him. It is not something reserved only for certain people, though many adults have never learned a means through which to share with others their own unique outlook on life. Creativity is self-expression. It is a basic human need, and people who have never developed their gifts so that they can express who they are can

feel a sense of frustration and lack of fulfillment. You can help Moppet develop his talents so that he can express them creatively. There is no other human being who is just like Moppet. He comes into the world with the seed of potential gifts that will make him different from anyone else. He will respond in his own special way to each experience he has. He will be drawn to some things and people over others. And, with your encouragement and opportunity, he will learn to express what he thinks and feels about life in his own special ways.



4. Moppet's giftedness is part of his nature, but it requires nurturance (to nourish, educate) in order to develop. It is in the nature of an apple seed to become an apple tree, and no matter what, it will never be an orange tree. But in order to grow into an apple tree, the apple seed must be planted and given the right soil, lighting, moisture, weather, and other conditions. Moppet, too, will naturally be drawn to activities that give him a chance to "grow the seeds" of the special gifts that are a part of his nature. But he needs encouragement and opportunity in order to develop his natural talents. For example,

you might notice your Moppet singing along whenever he hears music on the radio, on television, or on records you play. Your encouragement, plus some records of his own—not just “children’s music” but a variety of selections of good music—might give him a chance to expand his interest and skill.

5. Moppet needs to develop basic skills in an area before he can use those skills creatively. For example, he needs to know how to cook before he can combine ingredients in new and interesting ways to invent his own special recipes. To be creative, Moppet must first have “know-how.” Then he will be able to use the basic tools and information in an exploratory way, playing around with what he knows in order to come up with a variety of unusual, interesting, and unique combinations . . . and that’s what creativity is. People often think it involves no skill to be creative—that creativity simply is an unconventional approach to something. This kind of misunderstanding can lead to hesitation in teaching youngsters basic skills for fear of interfering with their “spontaneous creativeness.” In fact, we handicap Moppets by not giving them the basic skills as much as we do by discouraging their spontaneous efforts. There is no reason why a command of basic skills should interfere with Moppet’s spontaneity in creating. The key lies in how the foundations, the basic skills, are taught.

6. Moppet needs to use his gifts in order to develop them. There is an ancient Chinese proverb that can help you guide Moppet in learning the basic skills necessary for him to express his giftedness creatively:

I hear, and I forget.

I see, and I remember.

I do, and I understand.

This sounds so obvious, but it requires some thoughtfulness to put into practice. For example, how many times have you told Moppet how to do something and become impatient when he doesn’t do it “correctly” right

away? How often have you shown him how to use something and ended up doing it completely yourself while he simply watches? It’s easier to take over for Moppet than to let him do things himself. But it’s important to take the time to let him try things until he can do them well. Learning perseverance is an important part of learning to use one’s special gifts. It takes a while to learn a new skill, and Moppet needs the chance for practicing until he masters it. He needs your support, encouragement, and interest in his attempts, even when not completely successful . . . and your loving patience while he’s learning. He needs to do in order to learn to do with skill and creativity.

7. Moppet signals his areas of potential giftedness by how often and how long he is interested in an activity. He will naturally be attracted to certain activities and will want to engage in them whenever he gets the chance. For example, your Moppet might particularly enjoy pretending to be people he’s seen on television or in books you’ve read to him. Or he might be very interested in being with you when you’re taking care of your plants or gardening. Whatever Moppet’s interest is, you can best encourage it by:

(a) Noticing and commenting on his interest: “I see you like to be with me when I’m fixing something that’s broken.”

(b) Giving him the opportunity for involvement: “Would you like to try to fix this yourself?”

(c) Offering guidance without taking over or pushing too hard: “Here’s how I do it. Now you try. I’ll help if you want but see what you can do by yourself.”

(d) Being patient with his efforts and giving him encouragement: “That’s a good try. It takes a while sometimes to get things just the way you want. Want to try again?”

(e) Being accepting, but allowing him to judge his own achieve-

ments: “You worked so hard at that. How do you feel about what you did?”

(f) Providing him with materials to work and the time and space in which to work on his own. “I’ll be here if you want me. Why don’t you try it on your own now.”

8. One of the best ways to encourage and support Moppet’s development of his gifts is to be careful not to discourage it. There are so many off-hand comments, made without thinking, that can turn off a child’s interest and excitement in an activity. And once turned off, it’s hard to rekindle again. Here are some of the kinds of “roadblocks to creativity” to watch out for:

(a) “Don’t bother me now. I’m too busy to look at your picture.”

(b) “What’s this mess? Didn’t I tell you to stay out of the kitchen?”

(c) “That’s for girls (boys). I don’t want to see you do it again.”

(d) “That will never work.”

(e) “That’s a what?” “What is this stupid (ugly weird, etc.) thing?”

(f) “What would people think if they saw you do that?”

(g) “Come on now, is that the best you can do?”

(h) “That’s nice” (said without interest or even noticing what Moppet is showing you).

(i) “That’s not the way to do it.” “That doesn’t look right.”

(j) “Why can’t you do it like your sister?” (brother, cousin, etc.).

(k) “I wish you weren’t so clumsy.” (stupid, messy, etc.)

(l) “You think you’re so smart.” (said sarcastically)

We all have busy times and we have our moments of impatience and annoyance with our children, no matter how much we love them. It’s hard to be alert to the effects of your reactions (or non-reactions) to Moppet’s every word and deed. But it’s worth the effort because your opinion is so very important to Moppet. With your help and encourage-

ment, Moppet can develop his special gifts to their fullest capacity so that he can grow to be all that he is capable of becoming.



Artful Answers

One of the satisfactions of being a parent is being able to answer Moppet's questions, filling a small mind with ideas where there were none before. Of course, this satisfaction is sometimes replaced with annoyance, for as Moppet's understanding grows, so do the number and difficulty of his questions. Not only are his questions often hard to answer but they tend to pop up at times when you are busy or your mind is occupied with something else. Sometimes he will ask a question just to gain your attention, but more often than not he has been doing some hard thinking about something and has run up against a mystery. Whatever the circumstances, the way you answer his questions can have an important effect on the direction of his thoughts, both now and later. Your response can even influence his appetite for learning.

There are two easy but not-too-useful ways to answer a question from Moppet. One is simply to say, "I don't know." In our complex world, that may be at least partly correct. The other is to bestow upon him everything that comes to mind about an answer, phrased in simple, child-like terms, of course. Unfortunately, neither type of answer gives the child the kind of information that is most useful to him. The first obviously provides no information, while the second floods him with too much. It is very easy to be overzealous in giving an explanation, forgetting that each word or phrase is a new idea to Moppet. A few too many words and all is lost for Moppet simply can't hold on to it all.

There is an artful middle ground between these two ex-



amples. It takes a bit more care, but the results will be well worth the effort. The artful answer, as we will call it, gives the child an explanation he can remember for the present but plants the seeds for further questions and a fuller understanding in the future. This can be illustrated by comparing two ways of answering a question that Moppet might ask, such as, "What makes a car go?" A conscientious but overloaded answer would go something like this: "A car has an engine that makes its wheels turn. When you push on a pedal with your foot, the engine turns around and that makes the wheels turn so the car can move." Engine, pedal, pushing, turning; too many ideas. It is more than Moppet can digest and he may catch and hold none of it. A more effective explanation might simply be to say, "A car has an engine that makes the wheels turn." "Engine" is a new word that will require all of his attention. You can illustrate engine by lifting the car hood and giving him a look, again without much other distracting explanation.

A good rule of thumb is to look for the shortest and most general explanation that will answer the question. This will give Moppet the big picture, a single, important fact that he can chew on. After he has digested the main idea he will be ready, in his own time, for the details. A few minutes or a few weeks later he will come to you with another question, like, "What makes the engine go?" or "How

does the engine make the wheels go?" Then you can pause for a moment and select the best single fact to answer this question. It takes a little time and thought to be neatly concise. As Plato once said, "If I had more time, I would write you a shorter letter." But a short answer will get Moppet started on the right track and provide the fuel for further thinking. It is a morsel rather than a stuffing and it will whet his appetite for more. For your efforts, you will save some time in the actual explanation and possibly the trouble of reanswering the same question later.

Some questions will put a severe strain on your own knowledge. Unless you are an electronics expert, you may be in trouble if Moppet asks, "How do the people (or pictures) get inside the TV?" But do the best you can with what you do know. The best short answer, improbable as it may sound, might be that the picture floats through the air and goes into the set, even though you can't see it. This will fire his imagination for sure, and later he will be back with questions, like how does the picture get into the TV (through the antenna) or where does the picture come from (from a television station). Again, the answers are simple and center around the one most important fact that has to do with the question.

Your artful answers will lead to more and better questions from Moppet, building his understanding in the most effective way.



Fairy Tales

In a current research report from the National Council of Teachers of English, the author urges parents and teachers to use fairy tales more frequently, particularly when reading aloud to children. For some time we have censored fairy tales because they contain elements of horror. According to this report, however,

children from kindergarten age onward who are sheltered from terrors such as appear in fairy tales are prevented from learning the strength necessary to cope with them. Needless to say some children witness more horrors on television.

The author suggests that fairy tales also provide a necessary respite from the struggles of dealing with the real world. He cites evidence that children who read fairy tales may be engaged in a "sober striving to deal with the crisis of experience (children are undergoing)." At around 8 years interest in fairy tales peaks; fairy tales confirm the child's beliefs about the world—the protagonist, whom the child identifies with, is the center of the universe; the world has magic, and finding the right magic will transform important events; a good child conforms to parent figure's rules, an example of which is Snow White not being allowed to let anyone into the house while the dwarfs are at work; adversity must be confronted, but hopefully everything will turn out all right in the end; no extenuating circumstances will save the violator from being punished.

Finally, reading fairy tales and other good literature to children exposes them to a variety of rich language and grammatical patterns which they do not get from television.



What Makes a Good Kindergarten?

The very word "kindergarten" means "child garden" and implies a place for children to grow. It is not a schoolroom! It is not a prep school for First Grade where the child is forced into patterns of behavior and learning for which he is not developmentally ready.

A good kindergarten provides a wide variety of experiences through which the child increases his knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the world around

him. It affords opportunities to explore the use of eyes and hands together with sand, water, fingerpaint, paint, crayons, clay, and wood, hammer and nails. It also affords opportunities to run, climb, push, pull, build—and take apart again.

Group experience with age mates teaches cooperative play, role playing, sharing, taking turns and consideration for others. The shy child is drawn into group participation. The aggressive child learns to moderate and control his self-indulgent demands and to appreciate the feelings of other children. The imaginative child is free to develop his creativity in his own way as he learns to distinguish between fantasy and reality—and to enjoy them both.



The gentle routine of a good kindergarten leads the child into social awareness and feeds his excitement about learning. It does not make the rigid behavioral demands of First Grade. Rather it helps the child develop self-control and consideration for others.

Beware the kindergarten which boasts of teaching children to read and write all the letters of the alphabet, all the numerals, to count to 100 etc., etc., before they "graduate" to First Grade. Experience has shown that even at age six years a number of children, many of them of average or better intelligence, are not developmentally ready to read. The period between ages four and six is a period of rapid perceptual-motor

development during which the child integrates (matches), organizes and associates information received through all sensory channels including, most importantly, feedback from body movement. "Hot-house" forcing of academic learning during the critical developmental period can only be done at the expense of broadening the base of sensory and motor experience upon which higher abstract learning must later depend.

A good kindergarten will provide a child with a wide variety of planned sensory and motor experiences which will help him develop form perception, visual and auditory discrimination of similarities and differences, good listening habits, expressive language, and the logical concepts which underlie an understanding of numbers as an expression of quantity. A child with this kind of active learning experience will move easily and confidently into his first year of formal schooling with the necessary tools to make academic learning meaningful.

Avoiding the too-academically oriented kindergarten does not mean that you should also avoid the kind of situation-related teaching which may arise from your child's questions. A four-year-old may or may not ask such questions as, "What does that say?" "Show me my name!" "What is that letter?" Answer his questions. Print his name for him to look at or to try to copy if he wishes. Show your pleasure when he recognizes and points out a letter on a billboard or newspaper headline. Capitalize on his interest without going beyond it by assuming that if he asks about a letter he is really interested in learning the alphabet!

Use similar tactics with numbers and quantities. "Yes, you may have two cookies—one, two!" We commonly teach a young child to tell his/her age by showing the appropriate number of fingers. By also counting "one, two, three, four!" as we touch each finger we associate

verbal symbols with quantity.

A four-year-old is curious. He is busy, busy, BUSY exploring his own capabilities and the possibilities of the objects and places around him. He is ready for the group experiences of kindergarten—ready, willing and eager to expand his knowledge of the “who’s, what’s and why’s” of his world in the company of his peers. Learning for the four year old is moving, doing, experiencing, observing, talking, exploring. A good kindergarten will capitalize on this learning style and avoid tying the child down to rote memorization or pencil and paper copying tasks for which he is not developmentally ready.



More About Gifted Children

Recognition of gifted children occurs by school age although society does not always offer the education necessary to help them reach their potential. The high IQ child is not always the gifted child. The gifted child possesses creative talents, curiosity and a unique “sparkle.” We know from research that an early enriched environment stimulates the physical development of the brain in ways that allow children to become active thinkers, organizers and storers of information and intelligent “doers.” Given this information there could, should and will be thousands more gifted children than are now counted.

Customarily, educators identify the gifted child on the basis of standardized IQ scores, observations of the child’s behavior and the rate of development. The IQ or intelligence quotient score can show how a child compares with the average performance of children of the same age. The average IQ equals 100 but children with scores ranging between 90 and 110 are considered “average.” When IQ is considered the major criterion, intellectually gifted children must score 135 IQ or above. However, most enlighten-

Characteristics of the Gifted Child

1. Prefers the company of older children, and in fact, keeps up with them.
2. As a group are more physically advanced as a whole than children of comparable age and sex.
3. Speaks maturely asking “why” and “how” questions in order to pursue their meaning. On the other hand, the child is not all serious and exhibits a nice sense of humor, even making up jokes.
4. Is able to read, count and appreciate temporal events and representatives (yesterday, today, tomorrow, clocks, calendar) before entering kindergarten.
5. Classifies objects according to two elements—size and color, form, function.
6. Enjoys learning and persists with a task, not giving up easily. Since learning comes easily, it is unnecessary to tell or teach something twice.
7. Likes drawing, music and media.
8. Started to walk and talk earlier than other children in house or neighborhood.

ed educators realize that there is more to giftedness than a test score. Characteristic behaviors of gifted children most frequently cited are: resourceful, perceptive, persevering, logical thinking, mature for their age, able to generalize information, and as we said earlier, highly creative and curious. The interests of the gifted do not always center around academic pursuits although many do pursue mathematics, physics, social sciences and foreign languages in school. They exhibit talent in art, music, writing, the dance and leadership. Some teachers regard gifted children as peculiar and/or troublesome because they are intellectually threatening. Historically there has been a stereotype of gifted children—social misfits and physically and emotionally different. However, this is not true. While some may be non-conformists, statistics show that generally they become solid citizens, experience successful careers, demonstrate leadership in whatever careers they pursue, have fewer divorces, are satisfied with themselves as people in contrast to the rest of the population.

What do we do for our gifted school children? In a recent survey of this country, only 17 states reported having laws which pro-

vide for special programs or classrooms for the gifted. Only 3 states—Louisiana, Florida and Kansas—require special teacher training or experience for teachers of the gifted. However, more teachers are becoming aware of how they can serve such children within the regular classroom.

By making the curriculum a flexible one for all children, the gifted may be challenged to use their abilities to pursue such creative activities as writing, composing, drawing. After school enrichment is available at institutions such as the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., and the Museum of Natural History in New York where children can investigate ideas, conduct experiments and explore scientific problems under supervision of professional personnel.

Meanwhile, parents of preschoolers can offer some recipes for creative learning. Examples of such activities:

1. Pantomime or “Guess What I Am Doing.” Procedure: Each player takes turns acting something he/she likes to do. This is acting; there can be no talking! For example, one player pretends to comb the hair, moving the hand backward as if styling with a comb. The other players try to guess what is hap-

pening. The player who guesses correctly takes the next turn. Some other pantomimes: eating, swimming, sweeping, brushing teeth, pitching a ball.

2. Science Experiments. "Soap Push—Sugar Pull." Materials: Bowl of water, pepper, bits of toothpicks (bits of matchsticks, cork or wood shavings are alternatives), small pieces of soap, sugar. Procedures: (a) Have Moppet sprinkle pepper over the water and observe it float. Next have Moppet dip a small piece of soap into the water. What happens to the pepper? (It floats away from the soap.) (b) Now have Moppet sprinkle sugar into the water. What happens this time? (The floating piece of soap travels toward the sugar!)

What is responsible for these activities? Pepper moves away because of the oily film that is given off by the soap. On the other hand, sugar behaves like a sponge, drawing the water toward it.

(3) Riddles. Materials: Anything visible in the room. (With experience it will not be necessary to use only objects which are visible.) Procedures: You model the activity by thinking of an object and offering 3 identifying clues, such as size, form, color, texture, taste, smell or use. For example, you might say, "I am thinking of something that is red, round and bounces." When Moppet guesses correctly, a ball, it is his/her turn to make up a riddle. It is possible that Moppet's riddle will offer too much information, but ignore it and continue. Incidentally, it is important to deliberately make an error occasionally. It says to Moppet that all of us make mistakes, and mistakes are okay and without a penalty.



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Dear Growing Child

"As a former kindergarten teacher I know only too well the learning problems some children have—some of which you have so truly described.

"I realize no one has all the answers to such learning problems, but I want you to know that I learned the most from you on preventing some of the problems at the start.

"...So give yourselves a pat on the back. You are more valuable than you sometimes realize!"

*Bob, Carl & Paul M.
Anchorage, AK*



Next Month

- Separation Anxiety
- Problems Gifted Moppets May Face
- Creative Movement

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Problems Gifted Moppets May Face

Last month we talked about what it means to be gifted and how to encourage Moppet's special talents. We emphasized that giftedness and its creative expression is not something limited only to some children or only to certain kinds of talents. Rather, every Moppet has special gifts, waiting like seeds to be planted and nurtured so that they can grow strong, flower, and bear fruit. You can help Moppet develop her gifts by noticing the interests and activities she is drawn to; giving her opportunities to engage in those activities; and being patient, encouraging, and interested in her efforts.

In addition to the help every Moppet needs to develop her special gifts, some Moppets who are exceptionally gifted require particular understanding and support in order to develop fully. A Moppet who seems quicker to learn, highly talented in many areas, and generally ahead of other children her age can sometimes have problems as a result of her outstanding qualities. Here are some of the ways in which highly gifted Moppets can be misunderstood and deprived of needed support and how you can help:

1. *Sometimes an exceptionally gifted Moppet may not be liked by other children because she is "different."* Or, a very mature Moppet might be a favorite of adults but resented by their children who keep hearing, "Why can't you be more like Moppet?" Within a family a very talented Moppet can be the object of jealousy by a less-talented brother or sister. It's important not to compare Moppets to each other. Every child
2. *At times adults cause problems for a highly-gifted Moppet when they expect her to be as mature in every way as she is in her gifted areas.* For example, parents or teachers may become impatient with a four or five year old Moppet who can talk, read, and write better than most eight year olds when she behaves like a four year old. It's easy to forget that even though she's so advanced in some ways, she's still only four. (Research has shown that mentally advanced children generally are also advanced physically, socially, and emotionally, but they have their ups and downs like every other child their age.)
3. *Sometimes very gifted Moppets are pushed too hard and too fast in the areas of their special talents.* This deprives them of a joyful, low-pressure childhood in which they can develop their talents at their own speed and pace, in their own way. Too much stress on a Moppet's special gifts can interfere with her becoming a well-balanced, healthy, happy human being.
4. *At times extremely gifted Moppets don't receive enough attention from parents and teachers, especially if there are other children who have problems which require special help.* The highly gifted Moppet may be left to do for herself because "she's so smart, she doesn't need my help." Moppet needs time by herself to develop her talents in her own way, at her own pace, to her own satisfaction. But she also needs stimulation and guidance and encouragement from interested adults.
5. *Sometimes adults who don't know an especially gifted Moppet may treat her like a curiosity.* For example, we know of a two-and-a-half year old who seems to cause great distress to waiters and waitresses when she reads the menu and orders for herself. Some Moppets with special talents are "shown off" and asked to perform as if they were trained seals. A gifted Moppet, just like any other human being, needs and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.
6. *When highly gifted Moppets go to school, their talents often are neither understood nor given support.* Parents of highly gifted Moppets should be aware that schools of education generally do not prepare teachers to recognize, understand, and teach gifted children. A Moppet who is more advanced than the other children in her class will still be expected to do the same work as the others. If she finds it boring and doesn't finish it, many teachers will criticize her rather than giving her a special assignment which will



challenge her skills. If the gifted child tries to carry out an assignment in a creative, unusual way, she will often be criticized for not doing it "the right way." Many gifted children thus gain the label of "trouble-maker." Their discouragement can cause them to give up trying which is a great loss to our society which needs highly talented individuals and thinkers who can apply creative solutions to social problems.

7. *Exceptionally gifted Moppets often are neglected when funds are given to programs for exceptional children in the schools.* Few schools have programs for gifted children at all. Many people feel great compassion for children who are physically or intellectually handicapped, and educational programs for these children will almost always receive funding rather than programs for gifted children. People usually feel that gifted children "can take care of themselves" and can become indignant at the thought of spending money on special programs for them. But highly gifted children are handicapped in a society that stresses conformity, and they need special attention to develop their talents. Give Moppet the chance to develop her special talents. Notice the things she does well, and spend some time sharing them with her. At the same time, remember that she is still a Moppet. Be understanding of her behaviors that are not as advanced as some of the other things she can do.

Talk with Moppet about how she feels about herself and help her to appreciate her special gifts without feeling she's set apart from other children who do not share her special talents. Try not to compare your Moppet with her brothers and sisters or any other children. They are all special in their own unique way.

Help your Moppet to understand that other people will not always

appreciate and understand her special talents. Listen to her feelings about other people's reactions to her. This is particularly important when she goes to school. Try to find, or develop with other parents, an educational program that will give Moppet a chance to develop her talents.

Help Moppet understand and meet the expectations of the teachers in her regular classes when she goes to school. At the same time, talk with her teachers about giving her appropriate special assignments to keep her interested and challenged in the areas of her special gifts. Most of all, be on your Moppet's side. Help her to feel good about herself as someone who can get along with others and do whatever she sets her mind to doing.

Materials, information, and resources on gifted children can be obtained by contacting the National Association for Gifted Children (8080 Springvalley Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45236); the Council for Exceptional Children (1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091); the American Association for Gifted Children (15 Gramercy Park, New York, NY 10003); Office of Gifted and Talented, U.S. Office of Education, Donohoe Building, 400 6th St. S.W., Room 3835, Washington, DC 20202.



Creative Movement

A sure foundation for the acquisition of rhythm, body image and spatial organization is a wide variety of basic movements. Now there are locomotor movements such as running, rolling, hopping, skipping, sliding, galloping, jumping, creeping and crawling. Then there are nonlocomotor movements — swinging, stretching, bending, turning, twisting, and climbing. Finally, there are manipulative movements, movements that require the hands — pushing, pulling, lifting, catching, throwing, striking, and hammering. How can we translate all of these into creative movements

which demand thinking, listening, and exploring in space and time? Games of "Let's Pretend" allow a child to fulfill his/her imagination through movement.

Not incidentally, pretend play has been linked with superior intelligence. Researchers report that children who engage in fantasy play have larger vocabularies, longer attention spans and richer imaginations. Pretending is not sexist — boys and girls engage in and enjoy it equally. It has been found that the freedom to engage in such play is tied to the mother's attitude toward it. According to one expert, mothers who themselves admit to a bit of fantasy were more likely to encourage their child's "let's pretend" than mothers who did not. Their children preferred more practical, "earthbound" play and physical activity.

How do we stimulate creative movement and "let's pretend?" We offer some sample activities that may be done solo or in groups. What we especially like about these activities is the fact that everyone is a winner because there is no "right" way. These are all challenges and not commands.

1. Walking. "Show me how a giant walks, a midget, fairy, soldier, robot."
"How can you walk using tiny steps, huge steps, walking on your toes, your heels?"
2. Running. "How would you run if a monster was chasing you, if you were a baby, a very old person?"
"Can you run backwards, sideways?"
3. Rolling. "Can you roll to the wall, going fast, going slow?"
"Make yourself roll like a rocking chair, a log."
4. Hopping. "Show me how a rabbit hops, a kangaroo, a mommy, a daddy."
"Can you hop on one foot, now the other foot?"
5. Skipping. "How does a Princess skip, a hippopotamus?"
"Can you skip in a circle?"
(Skipping usually takes the form of galloping for boys

below school age.)

6. Sliding. "Can you slide to the door with your eyes closed?" "How would you slide if you held a broom in your hand?"
 7. Galloping. "How does a pony gallop, a cowboy, a rodeo leader?"
 8. Jumping. "Show me how a basketball player jumps, how high you can jump, how far you can jump." "How would you jump over a mud puddle?"
 9. Creeping or Crawling. "If you were a soldier, how would you get under this barrier without making any noise?"
 10. Swinging. "Show me how a leaf swings in the breeze, a tree."
 11. Stretching. "How tall can you make yourself?"
 12. Bending. "Pretend to pick a flower." "Can you show me how a very old man walks?"
 13. Turning or Twisting. "How would you pilot a plane to get away from lightning?" "How would a top go around?"
 14. Climbing. "Show me how you would climb to the stars, to the top of a bank building carrying a sack of potatoes."
 15. Pulling. "How will you pull in a 20 pound fish?"
- Games of Song and Rhythm
1. "On This Summer Day"
Music: "Mary Had a Little Lamb."
Actions should follow the words.
"Everybody clap your hands, Clap your hands, Clap your hands; Everybody clap your hands, On this summer day."
Variations offered by children and parents may include "swing your arms," "stomp your feet," "shrug your shoulders," "play the piano," "wash your face."
 2. "Around We Go" Music: "Lazy Mary, Will You Get Up?"
Around we go, around we go, One big circle marching so. (Walk in a circle)
Down we go, down we go,

One big circle sinking so.
(Walk with bent knees)
Up we go . . . rising so. (Walk on tiptoes)
In we go . . . shrinking so.
(Walk on inside of feet)
Out we go . . . stretching so.
(Walk on heels)



Separation Anxiety

Three and four year olds and, yes, even five and six year olds, may suddenly turn from being happy, independent out-going children who enjoyed their nursery school or kindergarten to clinging, terrified, hysterical children who refuse to leave their parents even to go outdoors to play! This apparently sudden change from happy independence to fearful, tearful clinging can come as quite a shock to parents.

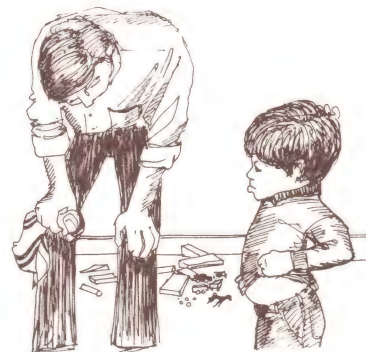
Mommy wonders if something has happened to frighten her child. She wonders guiltily if Moppet feels rejected and unloved because of something her Mommy did. Daddy says, "She must be sick! Take her to the doctor!" Both parents ask themselves what could have happened to change Moppet so drastically.

The name giver his phenomenon is "separation anxiety." It is quite common among children in the pre-school years. Later a similar phenomenon is re-labeled "school phobia." More usually, though, the episode of separation anxiety occurs among pre-school children or those whose entrance into grade one marks their first separation from home or parents.

Separation anxiety is a very natural response but not one which is necessarily easy to cope with. The child is experiencing his own shortcomings and for the first time recognizing his own dependency on his parents. He is testing himself, trying on his dependency and independency for comfortable fit and she is testing her parents as well.

Sometimes the episode can be related to a mother's illness which required hospitalization or even a

period of bed rest at home. Sometimes a mother's absence for the birth of another child will precipitate the anxiety. Sometimes no one can put a finger on the cause and, in searching themselves and their actions for a reason, parents begin to feel more and more guilty. They make excuses for the child, wonder if they have been "bad" parents, and in their guilt and fear, allow the child to manipulate them and disrupt the family pattern.



Meanwhile, Moppet feels less and less secure as he "gets away with" more and more. Moppet needs to feel that his parents love him enough to guide him properly, to set boundaries on his behavior and to make decisions which are best for him. He recognizes and fears his lack of experience. Through tears, clinging and temper tantrums he is saying again and again, "Reassure me. Tell me what I should do. Help me grow in confidence and independence."

Separation anxiety becomes worse as Mommy and Daddy allow themselves to be manipulated into staying home from a party because Moppet cries and clings to them, or by permitting Moppet to stay at home and cling to Mommy instead of going to "school" or outdoors to play.

It is not easy to carry a kicking screaming child to the car, take him to "school" and deliver him, still screaming. It is not easy to pry open Moppet's desperately clinging hands and turn away from his tear-stained face. But it can be done.

The reversal from parental compassion and permissiveness

to firm action must be accompanied by careful explanation on the preceding day or week-end. Moppet should be told gently and firmly that he is too young to make a decision about going to school; that Mommy and Daddy decide when he goes to bed, what he eats and where he plays; that they have decided that he will go to school. Tell him that you know he will enjoy being with the other children, that you are sorry if he's not happy about it, but you have decided that he will go. Then take him — and leave him.

Each succeeding day this process will become easier for both you and Moppet. You will have regained control of your family life. Moppet will know what is expected of him and although he may fight against these expectations for a short time, he will feel secure in the knowledge that Mommy and Daddy care enough to make grown-up decisions for their child. His world will no longer be a scary place with no protective boundaries to keep him safe. Instead it is an orderly world where by making small decisions first, he can grow up learning how to make more important ones.



Cutting Loose

Have you ever known an adult who was described as being "tied to mother's apron strings?" Unfortunately it is too late to help that person; the kinship established in early childhood is now learned behavior.

Ideally the parent-child relationship is solid enough to permit the child to move out of the family and still remain united to it. For this "cutting-loose" to happen, parents must allow their children to have independence; to do things themselves. Obviously the very young child needs to be cared for. However, the preschooler and kindergarten must physically and psychologically separate when it is time to enter school. Stifling independence nurtures dependence. There are some parents who foster

dependency because it serves their own psychological needs. Alas, when the child cuts loose, these parents are hurt and disappointed.

We at Growing Child have consistently promoted the parents' recognition of their children's need for independence. Apron strings are for aprons and not for confining children.



Sibling Relationships

We often write about Moppet as if she were the only child you have, but we know that many of your Moppets have at least one brother or sister. We also know that Moppet's relationships with her brothers and sisters — her siblings — are very important to her and to you. How Moppet gets along with her siblings can make the difference in whether your life is orderly (within limits) or chaotic.



It can also influence whether you are able to enjoy your children or instead find them too draining. Moppet's sibling relationships are important to her now and in the future. They will set many of her life patterns for how she will deal with others who are close to her. And they will strongly affect her feelings about herself.

Moppet's interactions with her siblings can be stormy or calm, loving or angry, cooperative or competitive — and often all within any time minute time period. Following are some guidelines to help you help Moppet get along harmoniously as possible, as often

as possible, with her siblings:

1. *Try not to compare Moppet and your other children.* They are different people. Each child has her own ways of reacting to the things that happen to her. Each has special strengths and weaknesses. Each one has her own rate of growth and her own pace of doing things. Each child is drawn to different activities, things, and people. It is natural to compare the times at which your first and second walked or talked or was toilet trained. It's understandable to wonder why your third child is afraid of the water when your first two learned to swim when they were infants. But it's important to let each child be herself. Notice the things that make each of your children unique, and encourage them to develop their own special talents. Accept your children's differences and you will help them to accept themselves and each other.
2. *Try to spend time each day alone with each of your children.* If you can arrange it, it would be good to set aside at least ten or fifteen minutes a day that each child can look forward to and count on as her own special time with you. For example, you might plan to spend fifteen minutes each afternoon with Moppet while her little brother takes his nap. Or you might give Moppet's older sister fifteen minutes in the evening after Moppet's bedtime. If you can't do this regularly every day, then try to find a regular schedule you can stick to at least once a week. We've talked before about a "special time." Let this be a time for each child to use as she wishes. You can offer a story, a game, or simply an understanding ear, but let her choose. These special times with you will help you to get to know and enjoy each of your children more while you help them each to feel special to you. You may find this gives you more time for yourself, too,

as your children stop competing for your attention at other times.

3. *Try to provide your children with opportunities for cooperating with each other in planned activities or daily routines.* For example, when you go to the supermarket, you can have your youngster who's sitting in the grocery cart look for one item you need in each aisle and then have Moppet get it and hand it to youngster to put in the cart. Or you can ask Moppet to help teach Toddler how to use the toilet when he's ready. Or Moppet can make simple toys for the baby such as a touch and feel book or a stuffed mitten "reach and grab" toy to hang from his crib, and she can show him how to use them. In addition, be sure to notice and compliment your children any time you see them working and playing together cooperatively: "Tommy, thank you for helping Michelle get dressed. You're really a help to me." "Angela and Ann, I'm so glad to see you're enjoying playing dress-up together."
4. *Set limits that you think are fair for each of your children.* Let your children know what the limits are and what the consequences of breaking them will be. Then try to stick to these rules as well as you can, changing them (with your children's knowledge) when they no longer seem appropriate. This kind of "planning ahead" can avoid many fights and jealousies over such things as who goes to bed at what time and who gets to do what. You will probably still get some protests of "It's not fair that I can't stay up as long as she does," and so on. But it is fair for children of different ages to have different limits, privileges, and responsibilities. When they know what to expect, each child can look forward to growing into new ones.
5. *Try to plan time for the family to meet together.* It might be a good idea for family members

to talk together about things that are important to them each and as a family. You probably already do this informally, at mealtimes or at special family times you share on weekends. Sometimes it's hard to get everyone together at the same time, especially if you work odd hours or if your children are involved in many different activities. It is important to try to have some time together as a family, just to enjoy each other's company. Also, each family member has responsibilities to the family as well as expectations and needs of it. These might be



worked out to everyone's satisfaction when the family gathers together and tries to support and understand each other.

For example, if squabbles occur frequently between siblings over household duties, this might be discussed at a family meeting. Sometimes it helps to make up a chart listing each family member's duties for the week or month. Then household tasks nobody likes can be assigned on a revolving basis. The attempts and perseverance in trying to resolve matters constructively and supportively in a family provide a good example for Moppet — a model of what a family can do for one another and how to foster this mutual understanding — when she, perhaps, sees over the family of your grandchildren!

Allowances for the children is another common topic of

discussion for a family meeting. This can sometimes be a source of rivalry between Moppet and older siblings. You can help them each to understand why they get the amount they do. At the same time you can explain a little to them about what it costs you to run the household, including food, clothes, and other things they need. This might help them understand the family's economic situation and their part in it — a helpful lesson for their future.

In addition to using the time the family meets together to work out problems, you can use this time to help your children understand and like each other better. Give each child, even the youngest, a time to express herself. Try to pay attention equally to each child, even the quietest. Show interest in what each child shares. Try to keep any one child from monopolizing conversation; be kind and supportive but firm about giving each person an opportunity. The children will learn from your example (in time, if not right away) to respect each other as you do each of them.

Next month we will discuss ways you can help your children learn to settle their disputes, avoid similar ones in the future, and in general, to get along better with each other.



Picture Game: Paint Whodunits

Drop a drop from just above the paper. Use an eyedropper.

Drop a drop from way way up. Does it come out looking different?

Drop a few drops of different colors. Fold the paper in half.

Drop a little drop of one color into a bigger drop of another. Try different combinations of colors.

Do these little drips and drops on damp paper, wet paper.

Make a little puddle of paint on the paper. Tip the paper so the

puddle drips. Tip it another way, and again. Pretty?

Try two colors.

Blow the edges of a puddle outward with a straw; blow hard; little rivulets of paint will branch out in odd patterns.

Mix up a thicker batch of paint. Print with a sponge dipped in paint, a jar top, a Q-tip, the edge of a piece of cardboard, a potato cut into a fancy shape, fingertips. If the paint doesn't stick well to your printer, add a bit of soap or detergent to the paint.

Dip a piece of string into the paint, let it squiggle down onto the paper. Drag the string. Whip it around.

Notice what else your child thinks of doing — let him (if it isn't violent!).

Dear. Growing Child

"Your newsletter is a joy! Thank you for such intelligent guidance in the area of child development. And also, by teaching me to teach my child, you are all doing adult education of a very important kind."

Sharon L.
Chicago, IL



Next Month

Settling Sibling Disputes

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10 Months

Settling Sibling Disputes

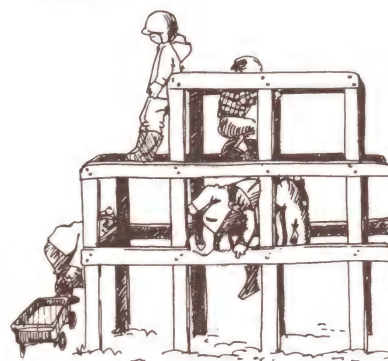
Last month we talked about ways you can help Moppet and her siblings get along better. One of the major obstacles to harmonious relationships among siblings is the constant arguing, bickering, and fighting that goes on between them. You probably won't be able to eliminate all such interactions, but you can help them to learn to settle their disputes in constructive ways. And, through this, you will help them understand and feel better about each other so they'll be less apt to fight when they disagree (perhaps even when you are not around as well!). Following are some guidelines to help you help your children settle their disputes more amicably and with respect for each other:

1. When your children argue or fight over something, try to get the whole story of what caused the problem before jumping to conclusions and blaming or punishing anyone. Even in a situation where Moppet seems to have hurt a younger sibling who can't tell his side of the story, give Moppet a chance to tell hers. For example, say to her, "You must really have been mad at the baby to hit him," and then let her explain. Let her know her angry feelings are acceptable but that you can't let her hit him.
In an argument between two children who can do so, give each a chance to tell her point of view. You can help this process by describing the situation rather than judging it: "It looks like you two can't agree on which television program to watch. You both seem pretty upset. Want to tell me about it? Laurie, you go first. Then, Joey, I want to hear your side of the

story." This kind of approach will save a lot of hurt feelings and resentment between your child, and it will help them learn to settle disputes themselves without fighting.

2. After each child has had a chance to tell her or his point of view in a dispute, help each also to see the other's side of the situation. If you try to convince a child (or an adult) that the other person is right, she will resist you because you're saying at the same time that she is wrong. On the other hand, if you can show each child that you understand and accept her side, then she'll be more willing to also listen to the other's side.
"Carolyn, you were playing with your toy and Brock came along and took it from you. You got mad, so you hit him. You didn't think it was fair for him to take your toy, and you're afraid he might ruin it."
"Brock, you wish you had a toy like Carolyn's, and you felt jealous. You wanted very badly to play with her toy, and she wouldn't let you even share it. So you decided you'd just take it."
"Carolyn, the toy is yours, and you don't have to share it. But I can't let you hit Brock."
"Brock, I understand how much you wanted to play with Carolyn's toy, but it belongs to her and I can't let you take it."
"What do you two feel you can do so you'll both feel good about it?"
At this point, with your continuing help in translating each child's feelings to the other as needed, they should be able to work out some sort of compromise. You've helped them over this particular conflict

and shown them a model they can learn to use to settle differences in the future, both with each other . . . and with others.



3. Encourage your children to settle their own differences and disputes when they can. You should resist becoming a referee in their fights and squabbles, especially when they ask you to assess blame, settle the argument and punish one of them: "Mommy, Moppet took my crayons. Make him give them back." Instead of being a referee, you can help by translating the situation as in the above example. You can help them settle the problem without blaming each other. In any dispute, both people contribute in some way, and they both need to compromise in order to resolve the situation. Once they've begun to learn how to do this with your help, you should encourage them to begin doing it on their own: "Dana, I'm sorry Doug hurt your feelings. Why don't you try to find out why he got so mad and try to let him know how you feel?" Be sure to praise and compliment them when they resolve conflicts in this and other constructive ways.
4. Don't force your children to "make-up" and lie about their

feelings following a dispute. For example, don't direct Moppet to "go tell Baby you love him," or "go say you're sorry to Toddler." Probably she doesn't feel either loving or sorry at the moment and she'll feel even less so after you make her say she does when she doesn't. She'll feel misunderstood by you and angry and resentful of her sibling, even if she did something to him she doesn't feel good about. When you take sides in a dispute between your children and you force them to mend their fences before they're ready to do so, you increase the chances of further hostility between them later, particularly when you're not near. Once each child has had her "day in court" and feels someone understands her viewpoint, she's much more likely to apologize or make-up on her own. And each time a dispute is settled by bringing out honest feelings on both sides, the hostility is lessened, thus decreasing the chances of similar disputes in the future.

5. We can summarize the ways you can help Moppet learn to settle her disputes and improve her sibling relationships by reviewing — with this in mind — the ten rules for discipline we proposed in the 51 month issue:

(1) Teach by your example. The ways you settle your own disagreement — with your children or with other adults — will show your children how to settle their own, no matter what you say.

(2) Be fair. If you must punish your children for fighting, make your "punishment fit the crime," and avoid taking sides. Don't punish either of them so harshly that you cause them to feel even angrier at each other and at you. And remember that there is seldom only one person at fault in an argument.

(3) Remember the Golden Rule. Try to put yourself in each child's shoes before you judge her behavior. Try to remember your own childhood and how

you felt when your parents stepped into your sibling disputes. Treat your child as you would have liked to have been treated yourself in that situation.

(4) Discipline with kindness and respect. Let your children know that you don't like and will not allow certain behaviors. But don't make them feel they are bad persons when they make mistakes. Avoid name-calling. Labels such as clumsy, stupid, careless, and the like can become self-fulfilling prophecies. If you do slip in anger, apologize to your child later and explain that you don't really feel that way about her.

(5) Accent the positive. Pay attention to the things each of your children does well and to their interactions that are cooperative and constructive. They will tend to repeat these behaviors since they earned your attention.

(6) Minimize the negative. Whenever possible avoid pointing out your children's "faults" and mistakes, especially in comparison to siblings. Also, unless they're hurting each other, ignore your children's petty disputes with each other. If you are asked to intervene or if you see a good opportunity for helping them learn to settle a recurrent dispute, then apply the techniques discussed earlier. Otherwise, ignore their arguments, and they may decrease simply from lack of attention from you. Remember, if you want to see a behavior repeated, pay attention to it. If you don't want to see a behavior again, ignore it.

(7) Explain your expectations. We talked about this earlier. Let your children know what responsibilities you expect them to assume; what the limits are on each of them; what behaviors you will not tolerate; and what they can expect if they don't meet these expectations.

(8) Be consistent. As much as you can, try to be consistent in

your responses to your children's behaviors. Certainly there are days when their arguing won't bother you, so you'll ignore it and other days when it will be the "last straw," so you might blow up. Still, if you try to respond in a way that is predictable, you will find you have much calmer, less anxious children since they know what to expect.

(9) Cultivate patience. Patience and a sense of humor are two of the most important qualities you can cultivate as a parent. Try to be patient with your children's bickering. Even though you may think the things they're squabbling about are silly, they're important to them. And when your patience wears thin, try to find some humor in the situation. Before you know it, your children will be grown and the lessons they learn now about how to get along with others, particularly siblings, will be carried into their own families.

(10) Think; Don't react. The suggestions we've made for helping your children settle their disputes and get along better with each other require you to change many of the patterns you learned in your own childhood. You will naturally react in a manner similar to how your parents reacted to you. This is especially true in emotionally-charged situations such as fighting and arguments. It will take practice and many trials before you learn new patterns, but it's worth the effort. Have faith and patience with yourself. It will pay off for you, your children, and your grandchildren-to-be.



Blocks and More Blocks: Attributes of Size, Shape and Color

Blocks are one of the oldest children's toys. For a long time manufacturers have decorated square cubes with letters of the

Play Things

4 years 10 months

Books open up a whole new world for a child

**"Let's read
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At Growing Child, we continually stress the importance of introducing young children to books. A book should be more than just drawings and some words though—it should entertain, inform, and stimulate thinking. The child who has been around books is no stranger to reading and learning when the time comes for formal education.

For your child, an amazing discovery is made through the pages of a book: those funny squiggles and marks on the page turn into words, words become sentences, and suddenly, the whole world is available inside the covers of a million books!

With regular exposure, reading becomes an expected familiar experience. And this has value many years later when the books are much more difficult: a calculus textbook, a chemistry workbook, a Spanish dictionary.

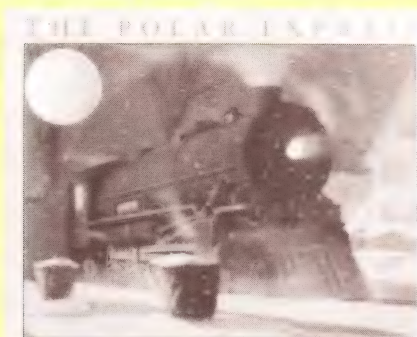
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A

A CALDECOTT HONOR **The Polar Express, by Chris Van Allsburg.**

One of the best (if not *the* best) Christmas books we've ever seen!

Award-winning author/illustrator Chris Van Allsburg created this extraordinary holiday tale, destined to become a classic alongside *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*.

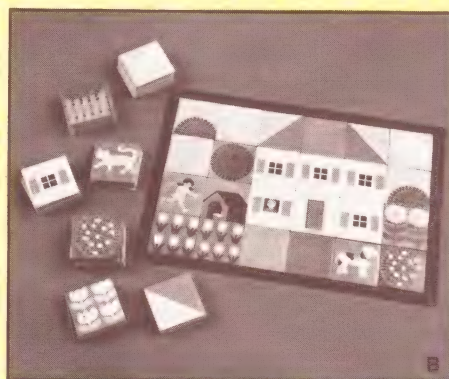
On Christmas Eve, a young boy travels on a mysterious train to the North Pole. There he receives a special gift from his host. Your child will be delighted at the wonders and surprises of this story.

Start a special family tradition in your home with this incredible and enchanting holiday tale.

Hardbound, 11¼" × 9¼", full color, 30 pp.

All ages.

TU621 \$17.00



B

B Create-A-Picture

How many different pictures can your aspiring designer make with this toy?

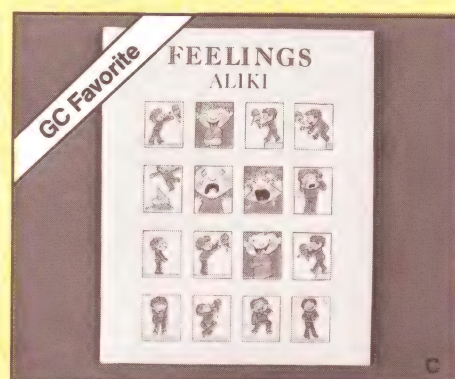
It takes creativity to design these scenes, and each time your child plays with **Create-A-Picture**, he's building visual imagination—"Where should I put this cloud?" "How tall can I make the house?" The variations are endless with picture cards for flowers, grass, sky, animals, people, and much more.

This is a good toy for language development as Youngster learns the names of objects, talks about the pictures, or tells a story about a scene.

Play with or without the base—big, table-top picture scenes can be made, or use the tray when confined to bed or traveling in the car.

126 cards, 2" square. 12" × 8" base. 4-8 yrs.

TUU17 \$17.00



C

C Feelings, by Alike.

How do you feel? Happy? Sad? After reading **Feelings** you'll feel terrific!

It's hard for Youngster to understand something he can't see or touch, something inside of him. But he *knows* what it's like to feel scared, nervous, or so happy he wants to sing!

Using mini-stories, pictures, and situations, this sensitive book illustrates a wide range of emotions children experience. It's reassuring for your child to know that others have the same feelings and thoughts.

We all need to scream, laugh, or cry sometimes—just like the children in this book. A colorful, humorous, very positive look at life.

Hardbound, 8¼" × 10¼", full color, 32 pp. 4-8 yrs.

TUU16 \$12.00

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D Little Bear Books,
 by Else Holmelund Minarik.
 Illustrated by Maurice Sendak.
 Little Bear has been around for over 25 years and he's still quite popular with the younger set. His humorous antics and adventures with his friends help to teach little lessons about life.
 You'll want to save these books because they make excellent early readers. Youngster will be so proud to read *her* book to you!
 Wonderfully funny, detailed illustrations and easy-to-read text make these true favorites.
 Paperback, 5¼" x 8½", 3 color, 32 and 63 pp. 3-8 yrs.
TU356 Set of three \$10.50

E Pick Pairs
 Remember the game you played as a kid? (sometimes called Concentration)? First all the playing cards are face down, and then turned over two at a time to try and find the ones that matched.
 Here's the same game—only now it's designed as a learning experience for children.

The pictures on the cards are organized into nine categories (children, animals, toys) with six pairs of pictures in each, so the cards can also be used for further games of sorting.

As Youngster is having a good time playing with **Pick Pairs**, he's building memory, matching, and visual discrimination skills.

108 cards in storage tray. 5-10 yrs.
TUV1 \$10.00

F The New Kid on the Block,
 by Jack Prelutsky. Illustrated by James Stevenson.

Here are over 100 wacky rhymes and poems—the kind that children love to read and listen to again and again.

And what wacky characters! A bouncing mouse, a boneless chicken, and a wolf in a laundromat.

The cassette features 24 of the funniest ones. The set makes a wonderful gift for that book

lover in your home.

Hardbound, 7½" x 9½", black and white, 159 pp. 3-8 yrs.

TU366 Book \$13.00
TU799 Cassette \$9.00
TU373 Book/Cassette (Save \$2.00) . \$20.00

G Four Favorite Games
 All you need for the game room in one box!

Four First Games (3 Year 4 Month issue) has always been one of our most popular items. This follow-up set is sure to please, with four new games for older children that offer more exciting challenges.

Included are a variety of colorful playing pieces and two double-sided game boards graded in order of difficulty—a capturing game (Trap the Cap), race game (Pachisi), number game (Snakes and Ladders), and storytelling game (Game of Goose).

The positive interaction with others helps children practice social skills and learn about rules and taking turns.

2-8 players. 5 yrs. and up.
TUV16 \$14.50

H Purple Cow to the Rescue,
 by Carolyn B. Haas.

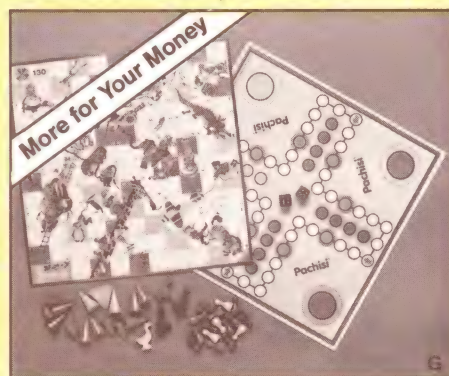
This activity book is a *must* for parents or anyone else who works with children.

Six sections concentrate on developing key skills and concepts, such as self-image. Within each section there are various activities—songs, poems, recipes, things to make and do. The step-by-step "recipe" type directions using household items make the book extremely practical and useful.

A "Guide to Learning Concepts" charts specific developmental skills for each activity. The book also relates to the needs of today's changing families: working mothers, single parents, etc.

Paperback, 9" x 8½", black and white, 160 pp. 4 yrs. and up.

TU268 \$9.00

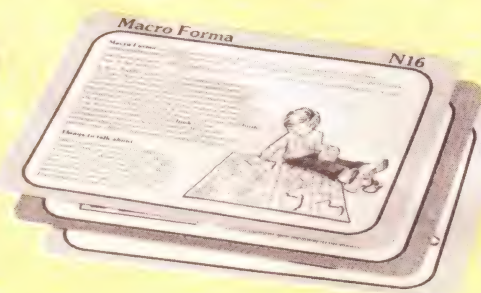


Our Guarantee

Our Guarantee is simple! We promise 100% satisfaction or your money back, anytime, for any reason. We want you to be completely satisfied with everything you get from Growing Child. **All Growing Child Playthings are sturdy, safe, and non-toxic.**

Toy Cards

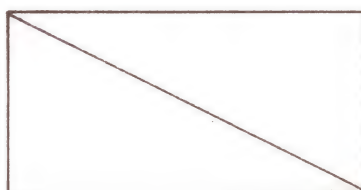
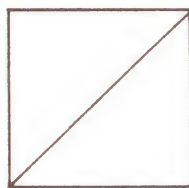
A special bonus you'll receive with most Growing Child toys is our exclusive **Toy Card**. These cards help you get maximum play value from every purchase by suggesting games, new uses, and adaptations to hold a child's interest longer and stretch your toy dollar further.



alphabet and advertised them as essential tools for child play. However, young children generally have ignored the letters and stacked the blocks into towers, roads, and railroad tracks.

About thirty years ago when professionals started to take children's play seriously, a different type of blocks became popular. They were pieces of unpainted wood of the same width and thickness but the lengths varied. A few half-thickness, curves and cylinders were added, but all the lengths — the particular attribute of this set — fit into the measurements of the basic blocks. Virtually all preschool educators agree that these blocks are extremely useful for the child's self-education; namely for the development of patterns of relationships; for learning about balance, equilibrium and stability and for the dramatic representations of the world around us. (*Growing Child Playthings* has such a set of blocks). If your child happens to play with these blocks, observe how the blocks stand for different concepts. We watched a child prepare a parade using blocks to represent floats, animals, and marching bands. There is also another type of blocks which contain the attributes of solid geometric shapes. This attribute contributes to the understanding of mathematics. For example, the cube is uniquely symmetrical. Regardless of how you rotate it, the cube looks identical when seen from each of its six faces. The rectangle, cousin to the cube, is also symmetrical. It has a fixed number of faces, corners, edges. The rectangle has played an important role in the architecture of ancient and modern civilization.

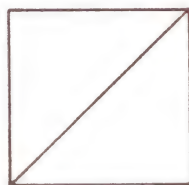
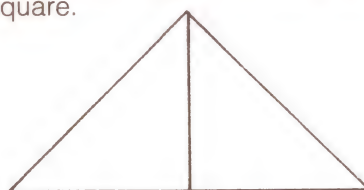
There are a variety of triangles and all of them present children with fascinating discoveries. When, by chance, they join two triangular halves together, they solve the problem of the construction of squares and rectangles, diamonds and hexagons.



Next, when children place two triangles together in a different fashion, say the opposite of the above, they create one large triangle.



Piaget, famous for his observations of children, presented an experiment using two identical triangles cut out of a cardboard square. The children were asked to make a larger triangle out of two smaller ones. Five and six year old children tended to believe that the new triangle was larger than the original square.



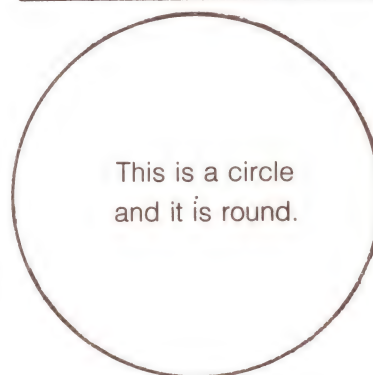
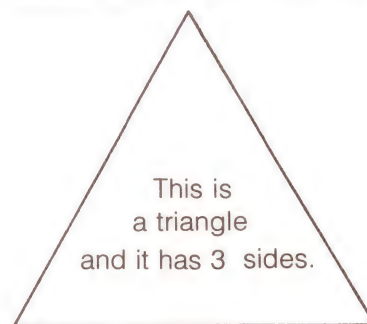
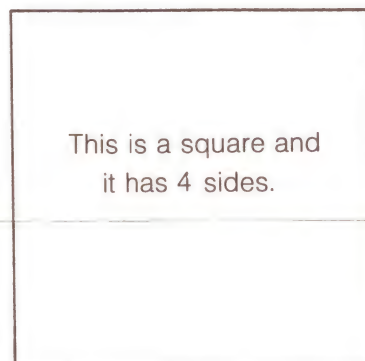
On the other hand, six and seven year olds made better judgements although they were frequently intuitive rather than logical. Children who had had experiences with blocks at an earlier age were more likely to employ reason and logic in their responses.

For more than two years *Growing Child* has recommended the use of color for purposes of identification and classification. Blocks in a variety of colors, particularly blue, green, yellow, red and orange are common. Parquetry blocks combine two attributes, color and shape in the beginner sets (cube, rectangle and triangle). In the more advanced sets are found the attributes of color, shape (cube, triangle, rectangle, diamond) and size.

Some Attribute Activities

A. Shapes and Color

Materials: 3 shapes: circle, square, triangle; paper, crayons of different colors, a piece of chalk.



1. Challenges to Moppet:

Can you find some circles in the house, in this room? (Plate, clock, cookie)

See if there are any squares in the kitchen. (Floor tile, napkin, window, slice of bread, kitchen table).

2. Creations. Make a circle on the paper. Can you draw around a water glass, jar lid or canned goods? Have you made



circles? Color them in with crayons.

Fold the square paper or napkin in half (corner to corner). What do you have now? A triangle, a piece of pizza, or a witch's hat!

With the chalk draw a square on the sidewalk. Can you hop along the 4 sides of the square?

The sample of the shapes are always available for copying or checking, thus eliminating any judgements from you. Should there be questions or errors you can ask Moppet if the shapes being matched are the "same or different." It is important to note that it is not until entrance into first grade that we expect children to cope with three attributes (shape, size and color) simultaneously.

B. Color, Size and/or Shape

Materials: Vegetables, fruits in the fresh food section of the grocery store.

Challenges:

— How many different colors can you find?

red (apples, red beets, strawberries)

blue (blueberries, grapes)

yellow (pears, lemons, squash)

green (lettuce, spinach, limes)

purple (cabbage, grapes)

white (cauliflower, onions, cabbage)

orange (orange, carrots, tangerines)

— What sizes are these fruits?

Find the small ones? Large ones?

Which are long and thin? (celery, leeks)

Are there any funny or unusual ones? (banana, pea pod)

— What fruits or vegetables are round? (orange, apple)

Which ones are big and round? (grapefruit, cantaloupe)

— If touching is permitted:

Which feel hard? (potatoes, onions)

Which feel soft? (leafy lettuce, grapes)

Are there any which are hard on the outside and soft in the inside? (watermelon, cucumber)

What fruits feel fuzzy? (peaches)



Dear Growing Child

"I cannot tell you how very impressed I am with your excellent publication. The information is so practical. I, myself, teach learning disabled children and can truly appreciate the time and effort your fine staff of specialists devote to the 'creation' of each issue. I wish there were some way to reach all parents with your publication—just imagine how many children would grow up untouched by learning problems if their parents had only known steps to take to encourage each stage of growth and development. Keep up the fantastic work."

Mrs. Barbara B.
Fairfax, VA



Next Month

- Guidelines for Teaching and Learning
- Arithmetic Readiness
- Do You Love Me—Best Of All?

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Growing Child[®]

5 Years
3 Months

Helping Moppet Learn How To Get Along With Others

The patterns for Moppet's relationships with other people are learned in his early years. He learns how to respond to others and how to treat them from the ways he is treated. These patterns are carried into his adult life. You can help Moppet learn to get along with others happily and effectively. Set a good example for him, and give him the opportunities, support, and encouragement he needs to work out satisfying relationships with other adults and children. Here are some guidelines that can help you help Moppet learn how to get along with others:

1. *Moppet needs to learn a balance between standing up for his own rights and needs and being concerned for others.* You can help Moppet learn to respect the feelings, needs, and rights of others without sacrificing his own feelings, needs, and rights. The place to start is with your relationship with him. Do you sometimes keep your feelings to yourself when Moppet's done something that annoyed or made you angry because you don't want to hurt his feelings? Do you hesitate to say no when he asks you to do or get something for him, even though you really don't want to do what he's asked? This kind of well-meaning sacrifice of your own needs to those of Moppet is unfair to both you and him. You don't give him a chance to learn to respect your needs when you don't let him know what they are.

Being either overly demanding of other people or overly sacrificing of one's own needs usually creates problems in relationships.

The continuous sacrifice of your own needs creates negative feelings that don't go away just because you don't want to express them. They may boil beneath the surface, causing you to begin to resent the things you used to do for Moppet with pleasure. Or, they may eventually explode in anger over an apparently unimportant matter. Either way, they



will interfere with your relationship. It's important that you treat Moppet in ways that encourage him to express his needs and feelings. It's equally important that you be honest with him about your own needs.

2. *Moppet gets his first lessons in how to relate to other people from your example.* He learns how to get along with others from the ways you and he relate to each other. He also learns from seeing how you get along with other people. He learns how to expect to be treated by others in several ways:

- a. how you treat him
- b. how you allow others to treat him
- c. how you allow others to treat you

He learns how to treat others in several ways:

- a. how you allow him to treat you and others
- b. how others allow him to

treat them

- c. how he sees you treat others

You'll see some of the effects of your "teaching by example" now. Other patterns, although laid down now, may not appear in Moppet's relationships until he's older. For example, suppose Moppet hears you and your mate regularly argue and blame each other over how to discipline him. He will learn ways to act with each of you now to try to please you and avoid your anger or disappointment with him. He will pick up from the two of you different ways to act with others who are more or less powerful than he is, which he will use when he's in conflict situations. And he will learn, from observing you, ways of treating his own mate and children which he will carry into these adult relationships.

3. *Moppet needs experiences with other children in order to put into practice what he's learned from you about getting along with others.* He learns his beginning ideas about how to act with others from family members. But he needs to try out these ideas with other children in order to gain competence and confidence in himself. With other children, he can work out different ways of acting and reacting that he probably wouldn't risk trying with you or other adults. He can get practice being the boss as well as being bossed by another. He can be a leader as well as a follower, a teacher as well as a learner, a caregiver as well as the one receiving care. With you, Moppet is limited to certain behaviors that are appropriate because he is a child. With other children, his options are more open.

Further, just as you need time away from a child-centered life, Moppet needs to get away from the adult-oriented world. He needs to be with other people whose view of the world and orientation toward life is similar to his own. Through his relationships with them, he can learn to cooperate, compromise, and strike bargains that meet everyone's needs. He needs to be able to work out satisfying relationships with other children in his own way, at his own pace, in terms of his own needs. This is why "free play" time or recess can be the most important part of children's school day.

If Moppet is in a preschool program, make sure he's getting some time each day to be with other children in activities which the children themselves structure according to their needs and desires. Also, try to work out an arrangement with other parents to get your children together occasionally or on a regular basis, to play or go on outings. Remember to respect Moppet's needs and preferences about whom he wants to spend time with and in what way. Don't make plans for him without consulting him. But do give him opportunities to be with other children.

4. *Moppet can increase the success of his relationships by using "make-believe" activities to practice them.* You can use puppets, stuffed animals, small plastic dolls, paper masks, or cardboard figures drawn and cut out by Moppet to represent people with whom Moppet has relationships. You can simply suggest to Moppet that he be one person and you another, and let him take the lead in pretending. Sometimes he can be himself and sometimes someone else, thus giving him a chance to "try on" different roles. At other times you can suggest using make-believe to act out specific interactions that are of concern to Moppet. For example, if Moppet is nervous about an upcoming visit to the dentist, the two of you could act it out beforehand, allowing

Moppet to take turns playing himself, the dentist, and you. This would help him work through some anxieties as well as let you know what some of his concerns and expectations are.

You can also make up "What would you do if . . . ?" stories for Moppet to complete. He can act them out or simply respond to them in his own words. Such stories can give Moppet a chance to practice typical situations with other people and discover those ways of behaving which make him most comfortable. You can make up stories that you know would help Moppet with the relationships in his own life. Here's an example: "Tommy was playing at his friend's house. He accidentally broke one of his friend's toys. What do you think his friend did? How do you think he felt? What do you think Tommy did? How do you think he felt? What would you have done if you were Tommy? If you were Tommy's friend?" This kind of activity is good for Moppet to play with siblings or friends, also. It could help them begin to understand each other's point of view better, a very important part of getting along with each other.

5. *Moppet will be more successful in his relationships when he feels comfortable than when he is self-conscious.* If Moppet feels comfortable, his confidence will tend to make those around him feel comfortable too. Feeling relaxed and comfortable with one another is a key to good relationships. You can help Moppet feel comfortable with himself and others by being supportive and encouraging rather than critical or discouraging. Here are some do's and don'ts to guide you:

DON'T suggest that he has trouble getting along with others, e.g., "You don't wear well." "Nobody really likes you." "People only like you because you do things for them."

DO give him positive feedback for getting along well with others. For example, praise him for playing cooperatively, doing some-

thing thoughtful for someone, being concerned about another's feelings, and the like. Be specific in your feedback, e.g., "I really like it when I see you helping Joey put on his shoes." "Aunt Ann always seems so happy to see your smile."

DON'T force him into uncomfortable positions with other people. For example, don't make him approach a group of strange children. Don't insist he "make-up" with someone with whom he's still angry. Don't force him to play with someone he doesn't like or whom he feels doesn't like him.

DO respect his wishes about how and with whom he wants to spend time. Some children are very social. Others prefer spending more time by themselves.

DON'T compare him with other children, e.g., "Why can't you be like your cousin Charlie?" "Susan is much sweeter to her little brother than you are to yours." "Dana never gave me the kind of trouble you do."

DO allow him to work out his own relationships with a minimum of interference from you. Explain clearly what your expectations and limits are. Then let him be, other than keeping your eyes and ears alert for problems that require your attention. Take another look at "Settling Sibling Disputes," month 58, for some pointers on how to deal with problems between Moppet and his brothers and sisters as well as with other children.

DON'T make him feel that you lack confidence in him, e.g., "Now when we go to Grandma's, don't upset her with all your monkey business like you usually do." "When your cousins come over, don't act like such a baby."

DO stand up for him, especially with adults. If he's done something you don't like, let him know later, in private. But don't apologize for his behavior, criticize him to another, or allow someone to criticize him to you. Everyone wants someone he can depend on, no matter what. Be that someone for your Moppet.

A Sense of Direction

We have had occasion in the past to comment on the importance of understanding the directions among the various shapes that make up our world. Objects are formed of lines and curves that point in certain directions from each other. Accurate perception of such things as letters and words is partly a matter of sensing the directions of their different parts in relation to each other.

A fully developed directional sense does not seem to be essential for learning to read, for a number of adults continue to show confusion about their right and left hands or about external directions like north, south, east and west. They can still read and do arithmetic problems. Yet it seems likely that they would have been more efficient in learning these skills had directional sense been better. For all of reading and writing contains basic rules about direction. Written words and numbers, for most Western languages, are read from left to right and the lines progress from top to bottom down the page. Addition, subtraction and multiplication problems are solved from right to left, but long division is done from left to right. All of these have vertical columns that must be lined up correctly. Many special projects involve watching what the teacher demonstrates, then doing it the same way at the student's desk. A good sense of direction is needed in all of these activities if they are to be done without great effort and confusion.

In the next few months we will talk about several games and activities to help develop a clearer sense of direction. Here are three games that will sharpen the basic sense of left and right.

1. Animal Twister

Cut out 8 pictures of animals and paste them at scattered places on a piece of cardboard about five feet square. Duplicate these on other boards for additional players. Then make up a

set of Direction Cards. Each of these has one of the animals drawn on it. Printed above the drawing is an instruction telling which hand or foot to place on the animal if that card is drawn. It can be in a letter code, like L H (left hand) or RF (right foot). This will make it easy for Moppet to learn. A full set of cards will have four placements for each animal. Then the cards are shuffled, and players take turns "reading" the cards and placing their hands and feet on the large cardboard animal boards as the cards direct. Soon all hands and feet will be placed, and a player continues until he finds an impossible situation or falls over trying to keep himself in the proper position. The last remaining player is the winner.

2. Musical Letters.

This activity will strengthen the connection between the inner sense of right and left sides, sometimes called laterality, and the awareness of the directions that outside objects point (directionality). Two glasses are filled with water to different heights so as to produce two different "notes" when struck with a stick or spoon. One glass is placed on Moppet's left side and struck with his left hand, the other is on his right side and sounded with the right hand. Then two to four letters are written down or shown on prepared cards. The letters should be of the "reversible" type, that is, b, d, and p, q. A set of letters is read from left to right, and the direction faced by the round part of each letter tells which glass, left or right, is to be struck. Thus the letters p b d would call for tapping the glasses in the order: right, right left. This will make a certain sound pattern that you can call music. You can take turns selecting cards or writing down letter patterns for the other person to follow. At first you may have to stick to two and three-letter groups until Moppet has the directions sorted out. Then you can use four letters at a time and may even wish to begin naming the

letters. A simpler version is to use pointing types that are often confused with each other in the first grade because they differ only in the direction they point. When Moppet is a little older, you can create actual tunes by using three glasses of different notes. The top and bottom notes will be indicated by reversible letters, as before. The middle note, struck by the preferred hand, will be indicated by any letter pointing straight up, like t or i. Five to seven notes will make a recognizable melody.

3. Treasure Map

This is a more challenging activity, but again, it is possible to start at an easy level. It is very intriguing to children of early school age. Arrange checkers on a checkerboard so that they cover every square of a portion of the board. Under one checker place a small square of paper with "T" written on it. This is a hidden "treasure," and it can stand for itself or represent a more tangible reward, as you wish.

Moppet starts with his finger on a designated starting checker at one side of the board. He then moves his finger in steps, either left, right or straight ahead, according to a set of directions you have written out for him. Your directions, or "treasure map," might look like this: R S S L S. Each letter is a symbol for the direction of movement of that step. If Moppet follows the steps correctly, he will lift the checker on the last step and find the treasure beneath it. If not, he will discover an empty square. At first as little as two or three steps will be hard enough to challenge him. The number of steps can later be increased as his ability permits. When he gets good at following the map, he can alternate with making maps for you to follow, though success at this may be many months away yet.

These three activities have as their focus the strengthening of Moppet's sense of direction, both internal and external. But as you can see, there are also the side

benefits of learning to follow instructions carefully, establishing a left to right scanning pattern with his eyes and using real letters as symbols. The possession of skills like these will give him a giant headstart in the fast-paced academic world soon to come.



School Readiness: Scribbling

A compulsive need to write, scribble and create are characteristics of many children when they enter kindergarten. Viewing Sesame Street and attending preschool has taught some children to recognize and reproduce letters of the alphabet and numbers. A more formal school setting such as kindergarten reinforces these earlier experiences and sends children to find crayons, chalk, pencils and felt tipped marking pens at home. This is good reason to save your discarded correspondence, envelopes and newspapers. You may also need to check your mailbox to be certain that they are not posted! A youngster whose parents donated a few bank mailers and deposit slips found that the forms had been completed, put into the mailbox and the flag raised to alert the mailman for pick up. The child copied the bank's name and address and filled in the blanks with a random assortment of numbers copied from the depositor's identification number. Another child, on her own, completed the milkman's order blank for the weekly dairy delivery. The child wrote down what numbers she knew, carefully placing one across from each product listed. When her parents tried to open the front door one Friday, they faced a huge delivery of bottles of milk and cream, cartons of cheese, eggs and butter, and loaves of bread!

Rhoda Kellogg, author of *What Children Scribble and Why* describes the 20 basic scribbles from which children's drawing

and writing emerge. These so-called scribbles are not taught — they evolve as the child experiments on paper. The scribbles which graduate from dots, lines, zigzags and spirals to circles go on to combines and aggregates so that these new scribbles assume forms which are very sophisticated.

Examples of combines:



Examples of aggregates (drawings which contain 3 or more diagrams):



If you have made a collection of Moppet's scribbles and drawings, you can observe patterns which grow increasingly similar to manuscript and cursive writing. The human figure and houses also grow out of the 20 basic scribbles. The original features of the figure of a person is a circle which frequently progresses to a mandala



when it becomes modified to



and finally features can be identified as human.



Arithmetic Readiness: Creative Geometrics

1. Construction Project

Materials: Dried whole small size peas, round toothpicks, small bowl, water.

Procedures: Ask Moppet to cover a handful of peas with water plus an extra inch. (An "inch" will be a vague measurement for Moppet. The objective is to be certain there is sufficient water for the peas to expand — a bit of science thrown into a fun experience!) The peas must soak about 8-9 hours and soaking overnight is just about right. (If they oversoak by days they will produce sprouts!)

Now Moppet can begin to construct with the peas and toothpicks. The peas serve as connectors for the forms. Since they dry out, it is important to complete the project at one sitting. About 1-2 days later the peas will have shrunk, dried thoroughly, and become a solid joint for the form.

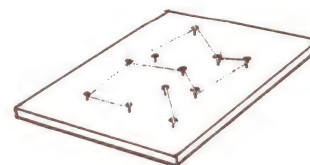


2. Design Board

Materials: Wood board about 1/2-3/4" thick, hammer, nails with one-inch heads ("common" nails), string, yarn, thread or rubber bands.

Procedure: You may have to assist Moppet in the hammering of the nails which can be spaced randomly as long as they are at least one inch apart and stick out 1/2" above the board.

Now Moppet is free to create designs — real or imaginary of form on figure in a variety of colors.



3. Block Building

Materials: A variety of blocks may be used.

(a) Cardboard boxes (which

may be strengthened with spray paint, tape, or by gluing strips of cardboard over the sides.)

(b) Hollow blocks

(c) Unit blocks (graduated sizes, lengths, thicknesses)

(d) Attribute blocks (color, size, geometric forms)

Preschoolers and kindergarten children build qualitatively different structures which develop from simple towers to complex multifaceted arrangements. Given the blocks, space to construct and permission for the structure to remain intact and be admired for a while, Moppet will use imagination to create such things as a complicated community where the block structures become symbolic of houses, shops, school, streets, bridge or tunnel. Looking beyond the actual block organization parents must be aware of the underlying perceptual and cognitive processes in which Moppet is engaging and their importance for school readiness. Take for example, the principle of balance. In order to make a symmetrical structure Moppet must experiment fully — heavier blocks balance on one another better than light ones; several small blocks may equal and hence balance one large one; differences in the strength and balance of a structure occur when identical blocks are placed vertically rather than horizontally; as well as many other discoveries.



Some More Thoughts on Discipline

Discipline wears many faces. To some of us it means punishment. To others it means teaching right from wrong. To still others it means setting clear behavioral limits and making certain that the child knows and respects these limits.

But really what we are all saying is that discipline is the process by which we "civilize" our

children and teach them to live within the constraints of our society.

There has been a lot written about the Do's and Don'ts of how to discipline children but this is a subject about which it is very difficult to generalize. Children's personalities differ widely and what works with one child may be a complete failure with another. As an individual child grows and develops his responses change and the method of discipline or "civilizing" must also change if it is to be effective. Finally, as parents, we are often not too clear about our goals for our child.

Parents who have more than one child usually become aware very early of the often very different personalities of their children. The shy sensitive child will respond to verbal correction or even to a stern look and because of a strong desire to please the parents may need comfort and reassurance instead of punishment. On the other hand the vigorously active and impulsive child will let the verbal correction just go in one ear and out the other. The correction must be reinforced by isolation, loss of privilege, a vigorous reprimand or even a spanking before the child can be brought to realize that the specific behavior will not be tolerated. Such a child must be strongly motivated before he will teach himself to control his impulsive behavior.

And don't think that girls will always respond to verbal correction and explanation while boys always require sterner measures. "T'ain't necessarily so!" The personality and not the sex of the individual child is the key to successful discipline.

The age and developmental level of a child is equally important. Behavior which might be expected of a two-year old will be unacceptable in a 10-year old. For instance, a very young child has few ways of expressing anger. It is a rare two-year old who has not bitten another child who takes a favorite toy or inter-

feres with some ongoing play activity. Undesirable behavior? Yes, but not an earth-shaking calamity. Correct the behavior — but recognize that these are very normal ways for a two-year old to express anger, frustration or aggression.

The same behavior in an 8- or 10-year old child would be cause for considerable concern because such behavior is not appropriate for his age.

But, back to your five-year old. Parents who wish to discipline (civilize) their children in the most significant yet supportive way need to learn as much as possible about the normal impulses and reactions during the various stages of growing up.



Most five-year olds are apt, at some time or other, to take something that doesn't belong to them. Does this mean that the child is headed for a life of crime. Or that you have a kleptomaniac on your hands? Not at all. The five-year old is impulsive and often a collector of things. He has not yet established a strong feeling about "mine and thine." He has been encouraged to share with others but still has strong feelings about what belongs to him. As yet he is still egocentric and unable to project this same feeling of possession onto someone else.

Discipline here should be firm but designed to make the child understand that what he takes someone else loses. No five-year old needs to suffer strong pangs of guilt for onetime offenses or infrequent lapses from desirable behavior. No child should be made to feel unworthy of love or

that he is a bad person who is beyond redemption. Better to make it clear that immature impulses in children are what parents are needed for. Parents are here to help the child develop his own controls.

When parents are aware of the impulses and pitfalls which are reasonably normal at each stage of growth, they can act with wisdom and without the danger of overreaction.

Finally, we should look to our own goals as parents. We should ask ourselves, "What kind of a person do I want my child to be?"

It follows that we try as hard as we can to be that kind of person, to serve as a model for our children. Remember the popular song of a few years ago, "The Cat's in the Cradle?" And the recurring words, "I want to be just like you, Dad,"? They bear remembering.

Eda Leshan has said that "the goal of productive and life-enhancing discipline is helping a child to value himself as a human being, safe in the knowledge that the stronger adults who love him will help him deal with impulses he may have which are dangerous to himself or others."

Discipline is not about punishment, but about education — education in the art of being human, of helping a child to understand that falls from grace are part of growing up and not a sign of being a bad or worthless person.



Allowances

Just about every kindergartner appreciates the value of money. An allowance is a particular amount of money that parents decide to give their children on a regular basis and with no strings attached. This sharing of family resources says to the child, "You are an important member of the family and we want to share our trust, love, respect and wealth with you." An allowance means

the child can be foolish, frivolous or frugal with the money; it is symbolic of family sharing. An allowance should not be confused with wages. This money is awarded for productivity — mowing the lawn, taking out garbage, making the beds.

Some families call an allowance the money they give their children for bringing home good grades or demonstrating behaviors they particularly like. This is a distortion of the purpose of an allowance. Equally misunderstood is the business of withholding an allowance as a means of disciplining misbehavior. The amount of an allowance should be decided by parents in terms of their own financial status and community standards. Too much is as bad as too little money.

If you want to teach thriftiness, give the child a small sum of money to deposit in the bank. Do not expect the allowance to cover savings, lunch money or car fare. There should be small but separate budgets. The allowance represents a share in the family treasury, a sign that the child is a member of the family circle. The child doesn't have to produce or perform in any particular way to receive an allowance.



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Dear Growing Child

"I really cannot begin to express how much I appreciate your newsletter each month. It gives me confidence that I 'might' make it as a parent to my first child. Sometimes I think you must have heard me ask those questions in my mind because in every issue you have helped me more."

Dana M.
Lafayette, IN



Next Month

Helping Moppet Put Her Thoughts and Feelings Into Words

Do You Worry About Being a Good Parent?

Growing Child®

6/88

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5 Years
4 Months

Helping Moppet Put Her Thoughts and Feelings into Words

Do you find it difficult sometimes to let other people know what's on your mind? Do you sometimes feel that no one knows how you really feel? Do you feel that others sometimes misinterpret the things you say . . . that they misunderstand you? These are feelings shared by many people. They reflect the difficulty that can occur in people's communications with one another. Faulty patterns of communication begin in childhood. You can begin now to help Moppet learn to communicate her thoughts and feelings clearly and accurately. If you do, you will be saving her many problems and misunderstandings in the future. At the same time, you may learn some things that can increase the effectiveness and satisfaction of your communications with others.

Communication is a skill. Like any skill, it is taught through a combination of example and practice. You teach Moppet how to communicate by communicating with her and giving her a chance to practice communicating with you. You may find it difficult to change some of the patterns of communication you use now, even though they are not satisfying. It takes a while to replace an old habit with a new habit. Have patience and try not to get discouraged when you don't feel you've responded to Moppet in the way you wanted. Use your successes and your failures as opportunities for learning. Just try to communicate with Moppet as you would like her to communicate with you if your

positions were reversed. By trying, you will succeed. Here are some guidelines to help you help Moppet develop the ability to communicate with you and others.

1. *Encourage Moppet to express her needs, desires, feelings and opinions.* Look at the time you and Moppet share. How



often do you ask her what she thinks of something, what she'd like, how she feels about something, and so on? Without thinking, adults often forget to treat children like human beings with valid opinions to offer. Children are often left out of decisions that affect them. It's not fair to you, the rest of the family, or to Moppet to allow her to rule situations as can happen when parents are hesitant to set limits. But it *is* fair to all concerned to allow each family member, including Moppet, to have a say in matters that concern her. Start where your Moppet is. For example, if she is very shy and quiet, something as small as encouraging her to tell you some foods she'd enjoy having for meals and snacks can be an important step in helping her begin to express herself. If she's more verbal, asking her a question such as what she thinks and feels about adults who talk to you

about her as if she weren't there (e.g., "What a pretty little girl.") can further open the lines of communication between you.

Make use of opportunities in your daily routine to encourage Moppet more to offer her point of view. In addition, try to set aside time for just the two of you to talk about things that are on Moppet's mind. Encourage her to share positive feelings about herself, joys, and accomplishments as well as worries, fears, and anxieties. If your Moppet isn't used to putting her thoughts and feelings into words, be patient. You will help her learn to share more of her needs, desires, feelings and opinions by showing her that you really are interested in them.

2. *Be accepting of what Moppet says even when you don't agree with her.* This rule applies to everything from not correcting Moppet's speech to not making her feel embarrassed about an opinion she offers. For example, suppose she comes breathlessly in to you and announces, "Susie ain't got no father." This could be a chance for you and Moppet to strengthen your relationship as she shares a puzzling and perhaps disturbing discovery with you. If you were to respond by correcting her speech, you might discourage her from talking to you about her concerns. If, instead, you were to say back to her, "Susie doesn't have a father?" you would be encouraging her to continue the conversation and, by your example, you would be teaching her the correct way to say what she had said.

If Moppet offers an opinion on a subject, and you know she's wrong, don't tell her so or

suggest by your words or tone of voice that she's stupid or foolish for thinking such a thing. Suppose, for example, that Moppet tells you that there are really little people inside the television. You'd probably be tempted to smile and then to explain to her where they really are and how they got on the TV. If instead, you responded with interest, "There are little people inside the TV?" "How do they get there?" "Where do they go when we turn the TV off?" and so on, you might get treated to a very interesting view of Moppet's thinking. You'd be encouraging her to share her mind with you, and you'd be encouraging her to use her mind in creative ways.

3. *Help Moppet discover and explore her own thoughts and feelings.* When you and Moppet are talking, try not to dominate the conversation. Even when Moppet asks you a question, try to guide her to discover what she really wants to know rather than telling her what you think she wants to know. Listen for the questions behind the questions she asks. For example, suppose Moppet asks you if you and Mommy (Daddy) will ever get a divorce. Chances are she's seen what's happened to a playmate whose parents are separating, and she's worried whether it could happen to her. By saying something to her such as, "You're worried that Mommy and I might stop loving each other?" you'd be giving her a chance to begin to explore just what it is that she's concerned about. Once she's gotten the chance to express her thoughts and feelings, you can help by giving her whatever assurances and straightforward, honest information you can. At this point your contribution to the conversation will be guided by your understanding of Moppet's concerns. Thus, you'll be much better able to communicate with her than if you'd simply tried to answer her opening question. You can help Moppet in this way to explore the

fears and anxieties that are often at the root of her "What if . . . ?" questions. By thus helping her look at unexamined fears, you'll help her learn to face problems with confidence rather than fear.

4. *Be careful not to put words and thoughts into Moppet's mind that do not reflect her true feelings.* In order for Moppet to come to know her own mind and take responsibility for her thoughts and feelings and the actions that result from them, she has to be allowed and encouraged to have and express her own point of view. Many adults spend their lives holding others responsible for how they feel, what they think, and what they do. Statements such as, "Well, I just did it because you made me so angry" are common. If you want your Moppet to learn to be in charge of her own mind, you have to be careful to allow her to be so now. For example, suppose Moppet has been working hard on an art project and she's beginning to get impatient with herself. You might be tempted to tell her something encouraging, for example, that you think it's good or that she should be proud of herself for working so hard. You could be more helpful, however, if instead you helped her explore her own thoughts and feelings about what she's doing. "Looks like it's not going the way you want it to go," for example, might be a good opener to get her to start talking. In this way you may lead her to the conclusion that she really does feel good about the work she's doing. With your guidance she may find out how to make it go the way she wants. But, wherever the discussion leads, she'll be taking the responsibility for her own thoughts and feelings about the situation.

5. *Learn to use problem situations as opportunities for meaningful communication between you and Moppet.* Sometimes you may respond to Moppet in ways that you don't feel good about afterwards. For example, sup-

pose she tracks dirt into the house for the fifth time in one day. You lose your patience and explode: "You are so messy. Haven't I told you a thousand times not to track dirt into the house? You ought to be ashamed of yourself." Your anger would have caused a different message to be delivered than you intended. Instead of talking about your feelings about a specific action on Moppet's part, you would have told her how she should feel about herself and what kind of a person she is. Repeated messages of this kind, if not discussed and remedied, can cause Moppet to lose her faith in herself. She will come to trust your and others' judgment of her more than her own, thus giving up responsibility for herself.

However, you can turn such a problem into a chance for learning. You could let Moppet know that you did not mean to explode. You do feel angry when she keeps tracking dirt into the house but you don't think she's a messy person, and you don't want her to be ashamed of herself. You just want her to try to remember to wipe off her feet. Then ask her to share with you how she felt when you reacted the way you did. Together you can explore how you both feel in such situations and figure out how to handle them in a more satisfying way for both of you in the future. This kind of approach to problems will not only help Moppet learn to communicate her thoughts and feelings honestly and effectively. It will also reinforce her feelings of trust for you so that she will feel able in the future to share what's on her mind without fear or hesitation.

6. *Develop the art of "responsive listening" with Moppet.* The reason most people feel that others don't really understand them is that they don't. Many people spend more time in a conversation "rehearsing" what they will say next than they do really listening to the person who is talking. Real communication

Play Things

5 years 4 months

“Who, what, when, where, why, and how?” ...

... At least once today, your five-year-old has probably asked you a question beginning with one of these six words.

Your child is quite a different person from the preschooler you knew only a few short months ago. From the ages of five to seven, an enormous amount of learning and changing takes place in a child's life. His questions are just one means of adding information to his rapidly growing storehouse of knowledge.

There are certain skills typical five-year-olds have developed that set them apart from other preschoolers. They speak well and understand adult conversation. They love to be read to and enjoy music because it's easy to sing along and participate. They play well with others and understand the concepts of games and rules.

Your child needs activities now that challenge him without forcing him to go beyond his capabilities. Much is expected of children, but we need to remember they are *still* children.

It's frustrating for adults when youngsters ask so many questions, but it's just as frustrating for the child who wants to *know* who, what, when, where, why, and how.



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A Word Play

So much to do! There can't be a more fun way to learn letters, words, and what they represent.

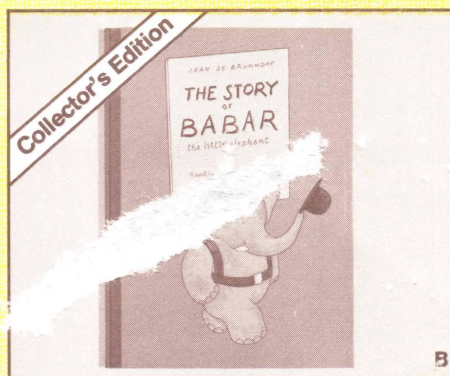
Word Play can help your child in developing these skills: vocabulary, pronunciation, reading readiness, associations, puzzle skills, and it reinforces left-to-right orientation.

The colorful crepe foam rubber puzzle figures represent familiar objects and actions. Your youngster can make simple words by matching the letters and the figures to the printed patterns.

Included in this Lauri set are an alphabet puzzle, familiar object puzzle and 16 word cards. Lost pieces replaced.

5-7 yrs.

UWW17 \$12.00



B CLASSIC

The Story of Babar, by Jean de Brunhoff.

Now, after a 40 year absence, the original, large-sized Babar, (first published over 50 years ago), has returned in this glorious new printing. Children can once again "climb into" what rare book collectors call "the Big Babar."

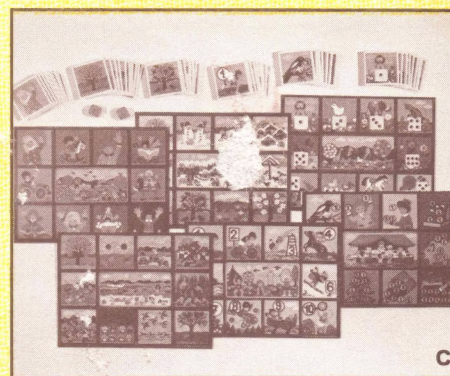
You may remember this book from your childhood: The story tells of Babar as a child, how he grows up and runs away to the city, and then returns to the jungle to marry his sweetheart and become king of the elephants.

His adventurous story brings a wonderful touch of fantasy, imagination, and excitement into your youngster's life.

A treasury for every child's library.

Hardbound, 10½" × 14½", full color, 48 pp. 3-8 yrs.

UW365 \$17.00



C Fun Numbers

That's right! Learning numbers can be fun with a plaything like this!

Your child can count, compare, add, and subtract with these colorful, versatile games. They're especially designed to be adapted to the skill level of each individual child—making them appealing for children of different ages.

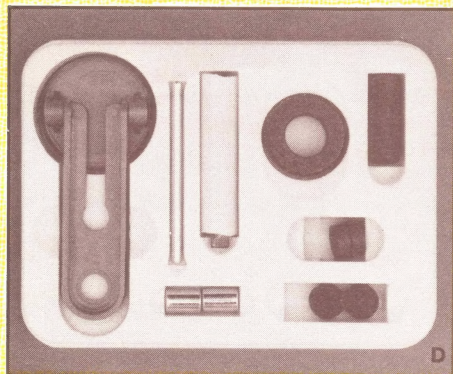
Learning to count isn't hard for most youngsters. It's simple memorization—similar to learning the days of the week. It's *understanding* numbers and what they do that's important—and that's where games such as this help your child to learn by making it fun.

Instructions are given for five games with variations and you can invent even more.

Six playing boards, 62 playing pieces, for 2-6 players. 4-8 yrs.

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D Magnet Set
 Why not buy your "future scientist" her first experimental toy? Who knows what amazing discoveries she'll make?

Included here are a variety of magnets, steel rods, and plastic tubing for a child's scientific play. The pieces provide the basis for 12 different experiments, games, and tricks that help your child to learn about magnetism and science.

A toy such as this encourages Youngster to be investigative and original. There are so many different (and unusual) things that only magnets can do. Largest piece, 3". 5-10 yrs.

UW919 \$7.00

E CLASSIC
Winnie-the-Pooh, by A. A. Milne.
 Illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard.

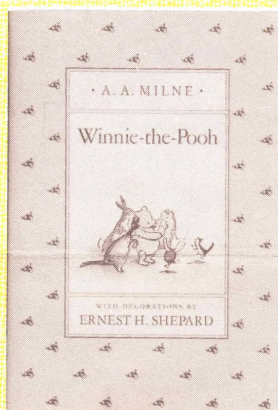
What can we say about **Winnie-the-Pooh** that hasn't already been said?

This is the original book, first introduced in 1926, and still loved by children the world around.

Join Christopher Robin and his friends as they have lots of fun getting in and out of trouble. (And of course there's always a little lesson to be learned!)

Without question, this is one of the all-time children's classics, and *your* child deserves to have it in his permanent library.

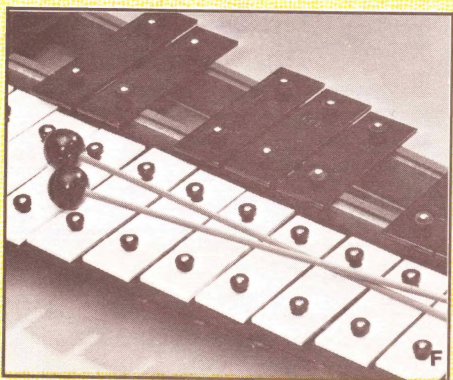
Hardbound, 5" X 7½", black and white, 161 pp. 4-10 yrs.
UWW19 \$10.00



F Xylophone
 This quality xylophone is an excellent head start for children who have expressed an interest in or talent for music.

This is a real instrument, endorsed by music educators, with a rich, resonant sound not duplicated by "toys."

Learning to play an instrument requires interest, time, and practice, and provides an



excellent lesson in self-discipline for children. Whether your youngster is a part-time experimenter, or serious about music, this xylophone will provide entertainment and learning. A very special gift for the whole family!

Bars, 1¼" wide, in hardwood frame, 12 white bars, 8 black bars. Includes 2 mallets. 3 yrs. and up.

UW967 \$45.00

G My First Concert, by Isiah Jackson and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

In simple language, the conductor and two young friends introduce the orchestra and the music it creates, giving your child an appreciation and understanding of playing and listening to music.

The accompanying booklet adds meaning through text and illustrations and makes it fun for Youngster to listen.

Paperback, 9¾" X 10", full color, 12 pp., 14 songs. 3 yrs. and up.

UW703 LP and book \$12.00

UW704 Cassette and book \$12.00

H At the Airport/Where Animals Live Puzzles

This set is a first introduction to jigsaw puzzles. Children love the challenge of assembling a puzzle, and these two have wonderfully detailed pictures that provide lots to learn from and talk about.

One puzzle presents a hectic city airport and the other shows the beauty of various animals outdoors.

Puzzles are visual and perceptual skill builders. They challenge your child's eyes, hands, and mind—all at the same time. Those for younger children stress fitting pieces in a one-to-one correspondence. At this age, your child is ready for puzzles where all the parts make a whole.

41/46 pieces. 15" X 11¾". 5-8 yrs.
UW982 \$10.00

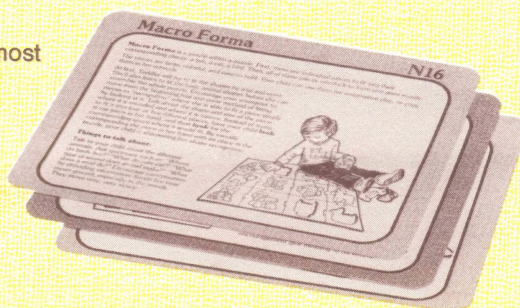


Our Guarantee

Our Guarantee is simple! We promise 100% satisfaction or your money back, anytime, for any reason. We want you to be completely satisfied with everything you get from Growing Child. **All Growing Child Playthings are sturdy, safe, and non-toxic.**

Toy Cards

A special bonus you'll receive with most Growing Child toys is our exclusive **Toy Card**. These cards help you get maximum play value from every purchase by suggesting games, new uses, and adaptations to hold a child's interest longer and stretch your toy dollar further.



requires that each member of the conversation try to see the other person's point of view. You can only do this if you're really listening. You can teach Moppet how to listen, and thus how to communicate, by your example. At the same time, she will be coming to know her own mind as she speaks it. From this she'll learn to say what she means and mean what she says, a rare and valuable asset.

The thread that weaves itself through much of the guidelines suggested above is a technique called "responsive listening." It involves "saying back" to Moppet what you think she's said. That way you give her feedback that you are with her in the communication, that you have heard her, and that you understand her. If you have misunderstood her, your feedback gives her a chance to let you know that. If you have heard her correctly, your repeating what she's said lets her hear her own thoughts and feelings more clearly. This gives her a chance to evaluate if that's really how she feels or what she means. It helps her discover, explore, and clarify her own thoughts and feelings. You can give Moppet no greater gift than the ability to know and express her own mind.



Bravery and Sportsmanship

Almost every parent wants their child to be socially accepted, happy and successful in school. In an effort to make ready, some parents anticipate by introducing subjects that involve values and attitudes such as bravery and sportsmanship which are two very abstract concepts. Actually children progress through a sequence of stages that are rather predictable. It is difficult to hasten a child's ability to manipulate abstractions although we can teach "splinter skills," learning which is out of sequence and not very flexible.

Actually young children act morally because they are ignorant; their behavior is controlled externally by their parents. They enter school about the time when they start to make choices and think of themselves. Finally, at around 10 years children are able to perceive another person's point of view and behave in a manner that takes other people into account.

What happens when parents try to teach good sportsmanship and bravery prematurely? While both concepts are worthy objectives and must be learned eventually, they can't be accelerated without consequences. Do we tell young children that they must enjoy defeat in order to be a good sport? Of course not. But this is what the child may perceive when the good sport, after fighting tenaciously to win, runs out on the field with a smile to offer congratulations to the winner. Or perhaps we teach a lie. The child battles courageously and wants to win, but he loses. Now the child must conceal disappointment and tears by pretending to be a good sport — that it didn't really matter and that he "couldn't care less." The lessons learned, to enjoy losing or to be a fake, are not what parents intended. Children who are learning the sacrifices and rewards for winning must be allowed to cry when defeated and to be reassured by you that it is okay to lose and to cry.



Do You Worry About Being a Good Parent?

Do you ever wonder, "Am I doing the right things as a parent? Am I going about it the right way? Am I doing what I should do?" "Am I too permissive? Not permissive enough? Too dictatorial?" "What am I doing to my child?"

Be reassured. There are child-rearing practices which run the

gamut from very permissive to severe. In the early 1950's a group of researchers headed by Robert Sears did an extensive study of child rearing techniques and their effect on personality development. They were particularly interested in how the mother handled a number of developmental problems: Was she permissive or severe in dealing with sex play? Did she control the child by spanking? By withdrawing her love? By depriving the child of privileges?



Although the group compiled a complete record of the parenting techniques typical of mothers at that time and place, they were unable to demonstrate that one method or another had any significant effect upon the child's personality. And, most important, they could not answer the key question: Did the way the mother treated the child really make a difference in adulthood?

This question remains largely unanswered today and some psychologists argue that parents have very little control over their child's personality and character.

Recently many of the grown children of mothers observed and interviewed by the Sears group were themselves interviewed and tested. The conclusion of this study was that most of what people do and think and believe is not determined by specific techniques of child-rearing in the first five years. Parents can rest assured that what they *do* is not all that important in how their children turn out. Many other influences in later life will shape what adults think and do.

However, what parents feel about their children does have a substantial impact. The study showed that when parents, particularly mothers, really *loved* their children, their sons and daughters were likely to achieve the highest levels of social and moral maturity.

What seemed to be most important for developing maturity is the amount of affection the mother shows the child in the first place. Does she like her child and enjoy playing with her? Or does she consider the child a nuisance. A child would be less apt to become socially and morally mature when the parents maintained a completely adult-centered home. Such parents tolerated no noise, mess or roughhousing in the home. Further, they reacted unkindly toward a child's aggressiveness toward them, sex play or expressions of dependency needs.

Father's affection for the child is also important in the individual's development of thinking and judgmental maturity. The affectionate father provides a role model and his children are more apt to think and reason in ways that show tolerance and understanding.

The moral of this lesson is: Follow the child-rearing practices with which you are most comfortable — but, "Let all that ye do be done in love."



Ecology

Something to Make & Wear

Materials: orange peel (large pieces of skin), needle, wool, scissors.

After you have skinned the oranges for the children, have them cut the peel into fascinating forms of their choice. Pierce each orange piece with a large needle and allow the peels to dry out for several days. They become hard, tough and durable, just like leather. Now they are

ready for stringing into a necklace or belt, depending upon the quality of peels that have been collected. Varnishing them will add to their durability and appearance, but they can also be painted.

Something to Cultivate: Ferns from Vegetable Tops

Materials: the tops of carrots, or turnips, water, saucer. Give Moppet the carrot or turnip tops you have cut off from the vegetable. Show Moppet how to set the top in a saucer. Then invite her to pour in enough water to come up the side of the saucer halfway. Within a week lovely feathery foliages will be visible. They last for a few months.

Something to Make and Sew: A Sewing Card

Materials: Plain side of cereal box, hole puncher, needle, wool or yarn.

Ask Moppet to select an attractive figure to draw around. Place it securely on the cereal box for the drawing to be traced accurately. Next, you mark dots for holes to be punched all around the figure. (A good distance is 1/2" separations.) Finally, Moppet can sew in and out of the holes.

Something Pretty to Make and Hang

A Collage

Materials: All kinds of discards such as scraps of ribbon, braid, tape, string, feathers, felt, fabrics, lace; old jewelry, buttons, sequins, glitter, beans, nuts, bolts; a large background piece of cardboard; glue.

Here is an opportunity for Moppet to be creative; to organize a variety of different colors, surfaces, shapes and substances into an attractive wall hanging. All the pieces will be glued but they may be shel-lacked for strength or covered with sheer plastic for security. To hang the collage, regular picture hooks may be used.

Dear Growing Child

"We were especially happy to receive your December publication of Growing Parent which gave us the bonus of meeting all of you who have been such good friends!

"I think that sometimes when we read books on how to help our babies develop we are tempted to read ahead & perhaps push our little ones ahead too fast . . . Growing Child helps me to absorb only what my girl needs at a particular time & nothing more — by being a month by month helper!"

Marilyn S.



Next Month

Helping Moppet Cope with Negative Feelings

A Look At Five-Plus

Growing Child®

7/89

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